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THE CIPHER:
A STUDY IN KARL JASPERS' METAPHYSICS

BY

(C) LANCE TOD ODLAND

A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

The cipher is the major focus of Karl Jaspers' metaphysics. In his philosophizing the cipher serves as the mediation between the self and God.

After placing Jaspers' metaphysics in the context of current approaches, I sketch his philosophical thinking in Chapter I by means of a discussion of three of his central terms. The philosophical underpinnings and the main features of the cipher are examined in the second and third chapters. And, in Chapter IV, I look at his last cipher, "foundering". This is followed by a summary of the principle ideas.

Overall, this thesis is a sympathetic presentation of what Jaspers means by calling his metaphysics cipher reading.

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INTRODUCTION

We will be concerned with three closely related questions in this thesis: "What is metaphysics?", "What is philosophy?", and "What is man?". At the outset I wish to make it clear to the reader that the intent is not to answer any of the three in so many words. That is, I do not propose to address the questions directly (other than in passing), but would like to elaborate Karl Jaspers' concept of the cipher with them hovering in the background. It is my opinion that Jaspers, unlike many philosophers, succeeds in dignifying metaphysical speculation while nevertheless respecting the insight that these inquiries (and similar ones) are immune to the closure of final arbitration. If, then, these questions cannot be resolved once and for all, we have a prima facie argument for viewing any metaphysical system or philosophical anthropology with suspicion if claims are made for its ultimate truth.

To be sure, we probably cannot avoid answering these questions with complexly interwoven explanations (even for purposes of casual discourse it seems desirable to have broached them), but we are learning to appreciate the fact that the answers we do devise are always contextually relative--in spite of our decided inclination to regard conclusions as somehow articulating absolute truth. We forget that answers in philosophy are rarely what we would call solutions.

In opposition to this tendency Jaspers speaks against

fixed, dogmatic formulations in favor of assertions arising out of ever-renewed questioning. This respects the fact that our existence in the world is, when it comes right down to it, a mystery. This is why the most consequential feature of the cipher is its infinite interpretability (and yet, as we will accentuate further along, its uninterpretability). In order to prepare the ground for an investigation into the "cipher", let us examine each of our leading questions "in passing".

What is Metaphysics?

The study of metaphysics has a history extending over twenty-five hundred years, but we will find no clear agreement as to its subject matter, nor a shared conviction as to its function. When Immanuel Kant, for example, wanted to put metaphysics on the secure road of a science, he discovered that three important criteria were lacking: an accredited body of results; a standard methodology; and an established domain of topics and problems. The situation has not really changed since then.

Traditionally, the term 'metaphysics' has been attributed to what has been described as a most fortunate coincidence. It is said that in the first century B.C. Andronicus of Rhodes referred to Aristotle's untitled lectures dealing with his "first philosophy" as ta meta ta physica[1], "after the books on nature". This is a fortunate editorial decision, if it was such, in that the word 'metaphysics' is a fitting referent for the subject matter of Aristotle's work: the science of transcendent being. The decision reflects the fact that this science (alternatively called "theology"

or "wisdom" by Aristotle), although concerned with first principles and causes, was to be taken up after the practice of the natural sciences.

There is, however, more than one way in which to conceive metaphysics, an observation that is given a cursory justification when we look at the word itself. Since the Greek preposition 'meta' (a prefix in English) is equivocal, the term 'metaphysics' is ambiguous as well. For our understanding of metaphysics will vary depending upon the way in which 'meta' is interpreted.

If we translate 'meta' as "among" or "in the company of", in contrast to "after", metaphysics can be credibly construed as the study of that which is alongside, throughout, or in some way coordinate with nature. This interpretation supports the suggestion that the natural sciences and metaphysics are both indispensable for our clear-eyed orientation in the world. Such a reading is in accord with those who hold that we look into more fundamental depths of being in metaphysical inquiry than we do in the empirical disciplines, but it is less consonant with the conception of metaphysics as the study of another world "after" or "beyond" this one (a conception referred to as the "two-world" fallacy by Hannah Arendt[2]).

Etymological clues aside, metaphysics has been consistently described as the discipline wherein we attempt to uncover timeless truth[3], an ideal inherited from the Greeks. Although he did not employ the word (as far as we know), Plato would have said that metaphysics is concerned with

the pure essences of things, the Forms or Ideas, in which the particulars of this world participate. He saw the task of the philosopher as the recollection of these perfect archetypes so as to contemplate the highest Form, the Good (or the One), in which all the other Forms have their fulfillment. Time came to be seen by Plato mythologically as the "moving image of eternity". Truth, unchanging and transcendent, he thought of as outside the flux of the temporal world.

Aristotle's conception of metaphysics as the science of being qua beings was developed in express opposition to Plato's world of the Forms and to his mythologizing. Nonetheless, he retained the idea that men can contemplate the eternal truth. Indeed, this idea was not widely doubted until the middle of the nineteenth century when the position was put forward that metaphysical truth is not timeless, but rather, very much rooted in historical situations. Nietzsche's statement about the death of God, for example, is seen by Emil Fackenheim as the denial, allegorically voiced, of timeless truth.

In this century the question whether metaphysical truth is timeless or historical is rapidly moving into the limelight of controversy. The debate centers on man's basic makeup: Is there a permanent human nature or is human nature itself transformed historically? If metaphysical truth changes along with human nature, the doctrines of a permanent human nature and of eternal truth will have to be abandoned as they are now understood in favor of a teaching centered

on our historicity. Today, the idea that metaphysical discourse can yield "knowledge" about man or about "eternal" truth is challenged by those who claim that truth is "essentially tied"[4] to history.

A current survey of metaphysics would be able to identify at least four main approaches. There are those, like the neo-Aristotelians and neo-Thomists, who still think that metaphysics is concerned with timeless truth. These philosophers would likely say that we can have "knowledge" of 'being', and that, yes, metaphysics is ontological. On the other hand, there are the Logical Positivists who wholeheartedly dismiss metaphysics as it has been practiced. Metaphysical statements are meaningful if they can be translated into scientific language. For a statement to be meaningful, it must be verifiable at least in principle. The positivists claim that most metaphysical statements are at best pseudo-informative; the rest are simply "emotive" or nonsensical.

A third approach is that of the Linguistic Analysts who wish to revise metaphysics (qua ontology) as now concerned with semantics. They hold that the structural analysis of language can give us knowledge about objectifying. Although the analysts have inherited the positivist critique of metaphysics, they remain in many ways closer to the tradition of Aristotle and Leibniz.

Fourthly, there are the historicist metaphysicians who want to readdress the issue of metaphysical truth. Within this group, however, we find both foundationalists and anti-

foundationalists. The anti-foundationalists (Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Derrida, Rorty) wish to "deconstruct" metaphysics altogether. On the whole, this group would consider the foundationalists (Hegel, Dewey) to be too bound to the tradition, and hence, too scientistic. Jaspers, if he is to be included anywhere (classification is often less than helpful), would fall in this fourth group somewhere in the middle of the continuum.

What is Philosophy?

Some readers may think it a scandal that there is no agreement about the nature and meaning of metaphysics. They are likely to be doubly disconcerted when they discover the state of affairs to be little different when it comes to the nature of philosophy itself. What exactly is it that philosophers do when alone in their homes or amongst us in the market-place? What precisely is it that they ask us to perform along with them? What, in other words, does it mean to philosophize?

Again, broadly speaking, there are two diametrically opposed views about the nature of philosophy. On the one side philosophy is advocated as a science in that it too is thought to be characteristically methodological, and in that philosophers, like the scientists, seek finally assured "results". Exponents of this outlook tend to assign quite specific tasks to philosophy: the definition of universal terms; or the determination of formal causes; or, particularly today, the knowledge of epistemic foundations. These people seek to establish "unassailable grounds" for justified

true belief in all spheres of human endeavor. Whatever is not amenable to epistemic grounding is merely subjective, poetic, or non-cognitive. But what seems to be presupposed is that thinking is purely cognitive.

On the other side, it is held that philosophy and science are to be clearly distinguished. In his insistence that science and philosophy are distinct Jaspers is second to none. He would say that the two are to be distinguished so that they might be more truthfully related. Philosophizing is called for if we are to determine the meaning of science, but this is not to judge on its own terms the correctness of any scientific finding.

Jaspers bases this distinction upon the idea that philosophy is a matter of individual self-realization whereas what is objectively verifiable will be the concern of science. He supports philosophizing as an inner activity of the person in concrete, historical situations; it has meaning as a wholly individual actualization and not because we can subject it to the constitutive categories of thought. The activity itself is its meaning. For Jaspers, philosophizing is an activity of self-deepening.

The philosopher is interested in what is infinitely significant, the individual's historic actuality. To be infinitely significant is to be unfathomably unique. This, every individual is. Philosophizing, from this perspective, is not an activity aimed at "knowing" (in which case it would be a science); rather, its goal is to bring the individual to a truer sense of self, of the world, and of God.

What is Man?

This was Kant's summary question[5], and today it remains singularly pressing--seemingly moreso than at any previous time in world history. Although we are learning more and more about human beings through the sciences, at the same time we are experiencing greater uncertainty as to what man is when regarded as a unified whole. We do not want to understand Kant's question as asking about man as the object of any particular science. Instead, it asks after the whole man. When we ask this question, we are seeking to remain open and responsive to man's freedom; we are not seeking to comprehend man in terms of his natural and historical "facticity".

In scientific explorations the individual is observed objectively, hence, discretely; but when we wish to speak about the "whole man", we cannot remain mere observers. We are always talking about ourselves when we frame this question, and not some third party. Because it is asked by someone who cannot escape confinement in time, the question is unanswerable sub specie aeternitatis. No conceivable answer will enable us to know man in toto.

Jaspers' Metaphysics

Jaspers believes that metaphysics is the quintessence of philosophy. His metaphysics is of the kind Kant meant by his "true metaphysics", metaphysica specialis, which deals with the regulative ideas of Reason: freedom, immortality, and God.

When we engage in metaphysics, according to Jaspers,

we are thinking in systematically developed 'conceptual movements' in order to transform our consciousness of existing. This transformation cannot be demonstrated; it cannot be guaranteed. Even the notion of transforming consciousness is rather enigmatic. But Jaspers does make it clear that it is not the concepts per se which are important. The concepts are important insofar as they permit us to "think the unthinkable". The experience of the "non-rational" can arise through conceptual speculation. In part, it is the experience of one's authentic self.

Jaspers teaches that the authentic self is not the self which appears to itself in the world (although the phenomenal self is a pre-condition for the awareness of genuine selfhood to occur). The authentic self is not to be construed as substantive. It is the self which does the thinking and cannot be objectified in any thought.

Authentic selfhood lies in the possibility of unconditional action in the world, i.e., action which is determined on the basis of one's own inner imperative. In free decision the individual chooses himself as an act of faith. In metaphysics, therefore, we strive to clarify the manner in which we are able to transcend objective determinations so as to realize ourselves in our freedom.

This kind of thinking traces the limits of what is inter-subjectively communicable. When we are able to discern where in thought our concepts cease to be self-evident, we become more conscious of that reality against which our logic collapses. A distinction between the empirical reality

we can know (Realität) and the reality we can only be aware of opaquely (Wirklichkeit) is basic to Jaspers. It is central to our understanding how it is that the assurance of true self-being arises when our thought gives way. This assurance is deeper, more "inwardly gripping", than the justified certainty of scientific knowledge.

Another primary distinction of Jaspers is the one drawn by Kant between Reason and the intellect. It is the case that our awareness of reality in Jaspers' sense of Wirklichkeit is possible only because Reason is able to transcend the objective determinations of the intellect by relativizing all objectivities in light of absolute being. Reason, in Jaspers' estimation, is the avenue whereby we are able to experience a reconciliation of the subject-object polarity which otherwise limits the "lower-level" intellect. The subject-object dichotomy is the fundamental phenomenon of our consciousness in the world.

These two poles, however, are in relationship to the totality of being (Being) which is mediated through both simultaneously. The subject and object are entwined in a higher union that reveals itself as a transcendent reality inaccessible to our cognition. Hence, Jaspers discerns three poles of being: object, subject, and Being (or being-in-itself).

Our ability to know objects is contingent upon this differentiation; to be aware of the subject-object split is already to view this distinction from a higher vantage point. We become conscious of an immediate "Objectivity"

through the involvement of our entire nature in an experience of the spontaneous mediation of knowledge and self-being. It is not an "act of knowing", but is the experience of Being which arises through the inner action accomplished by way of thinking. This inner action, however, is not thought itself. We encounter Being, Wirklichkeit, only at the limits of cognition. Jaspers does not claim that we "know" Being; his claim, rather, is that we encounter Being, and this only by being free.

But, Jaspers would add, freedom (hence, self-authenticity) is achieved only through communication. Through what we may call a communicative metaphysics we are prepared to act in freedom: reflection of the "substance" of our traditions yields new possibilities; knowledge of the empirical world shows us what is and is not technically possible; and through self-disclosure to other human beings we discover who we truly are and might be.

To participate in a communicative metaphysics is necessary if consciousness is to undergo transformation. It is only when I seek to relate to the other person as a subject that I begin genuinely to communicate. If I then relate to the other as I would to an object, communication ceases. What is more, by treating the other as less than a free subject, I deny my own freedom. It is only through communication and the actualization of freedom that human existence becomes more and more transparent to consciousness. It is, indeed, Jaspers' focus on communication which gives his presentation of metaphysics its eminent appeal.

The primary source of philosophy is the will to communicate according to Jaspers. The will to know, the impetus behind science, originates from this source as well, but on a different level. Jaspers develops communication as an unending demand upon human beings: not only knowledge is to be transmitted, but the individual is called upon to convey his personal being, his truth, in every interaction.

Actually, when we are philosophizing, Jaspers would have us realize that we are engaged in seeking to extend universal communication by making conscious the presuppositions necessary for its achievement--and this in every conversation where we remain open to the other. Jaspers' philosopher attempts to be himself without denying the freedom of the other to his own self-choices. It is clear, however, that, if universal communication is to be more than a pipe dream, the fact that there are a plurality of world-views must be respected.

As employed by Jaspers, 'communication' covers the exchanges between men only. It is not to be taken in a broader sense as when we speak about "communicating with nature". He makes it clear that this is because the possibility of self-realization arises only in association with other human beings. Along with Martin Buber, Jaspers points out that the mutual reciprocity of men in their historic communities is an indubitable reality which thinking that begins with the Cartesian cogito tends to obscure. The process whereby we attain to authenticity occurs only in relation with other men.

Jaspers sets forth communicability as a criterion of philosophical truth. To the degree that a thought promotes communication, it is to be judged more or less true. The highest degree of truth is that which makes possible the deepest existential union of one self with another. This, of course, moves beyond the traditional conception of truth as the correspondence between intellect and thing, i.e., beyond propositional truth. In Jaspers' sense, a metaphysical thought is deemed true to the extent that it is able to forge communicative unity among men.

Moreover, communication between men is open-ended in time. This means that no individual can be known in any final way. If, furthermore, communication cannot be brought to an end (in any legitimate sense), metaphysical speculation cannot lead to a totality of knowledge.

The Kantian insight that we cannot cognize Being itself is accepted by Jaspers. Everything that becomes an "object" for us is but an <u>appearance</u> of the "thing in itself", i.e., it is as our consciousness (the transcendental I in general) frames it. This is important because the idea of being-in-itself (a "boundary concept" for Jaspers) relativizes all objective being. In opposition to the classical traditions, therefore, Jaspers disavows the possibility of a conclusive ontology. For him, metaphysics is not ontological, but becomes the ongoing search for the opportunities which lie open to us in the historical movement of developing self-consciousness.

The value of metaphysics to Jaspers' way of thinking

is that it prepares us for the experience of "transcendent reality". This experience is not possible if our thinking is restricted to categorical thought. Particularly in what Jaspers calls "boundary situations"[6], the self becomes aware of its own existential roots in this reality. In many ways we will want to say that the experience of transcendent reality is the actualization of the Socratic imperative to know the self--not the self as an object, but as it is in the depths of interior being.

Accordingly, Jaspers has been criticized for an exaggerated subjectivism[7], but this is not an objection with which we can agree. We cannot agree since Jaspers, as pointed out, understands the will to authentic communication to be the source of philosophizing, so much so that it is a real question whether we can even speak about the individual as philosophizing on his or her own. In addition, for Jaspers, metaphysical thinking always moves between the contents of tradition and the self-awareness of transcendent reality in the present. Genuine selfhood is thus not an exacerbated individualism, but will recognize "social and historical" constraints on the individual's philosophic will (albeit as self-imposed).

In the following pages another distinction which Jaspers draws, between metaphysical and scientific objectivity, will be central. Scientific objectivity is epistemically grounded in the categories of the intellect, but metaphysical objectivity is a transient language whereby we ascertain our deepest realities in communication which is essentially historic.

This is a keystone point for understanding Jaspers' thought. When an individual philosophizes, Jaspers tells us, his thinking and his being are inseparable, whereas in scientific research the person deliberately disengages from the matter he is dealing with. The scientific object is approached by "consciousness-as-such" (a Kantian term for the intellect), but the metaphysical objectivity is apprehended by the self, the source of all cognition. As it is not trans-subjective, the metaphysical objectivity requires existential adoption in time. It cannot be adequately articulated in statements of universal validity, therefore, it will not be equally accessible to all. It is, so to speak, an historic "word" of freedom.

Unless metaphysical objectivity is recognized to be multi-lateral, as lying on no single plane, Jaspers believes that communication between conflicting world-views will be impeded. The metaphysical objectivity, and this is the cipher, is not meant strictly as an object-in-itself, but "speaks for" a reality which is unobjectifiable. Reality, Wirklichkeit, is all-encompassing; it is the fullest actuality.

In clarification, then, Jaspers would have us seek to cultivate a thinking which is able to transform our self-awareness. This transformation will not be possible if we restrict ourselves to the objective observations obtained through the sciences. Scientific cognition does not provide us with individual self-knowledge, nor does it allow us direct insight into Being in its unfathomable unity. In science we are able to delineate the object with which we are

concerned through "methodic self-restraint", but in philosophizing we are to appropriate (to make our own) that which is universally communicable (the philosophic texts) into our singularly historic self-becoming. By striving to assimilate into our lives the metaphysical symbols of our traditions, we come to respect the "substance" of our inheritance as conveying the stages of truth which bring us to ourselves (provided we do not lose the openness of the true self by fixing truth in a universal form).

The Cipher

The need for the modern thinker to attain to clarity with regard to the relation between philosophy and science has been emerging ever more sharply since the European Enlightenment and the writings of Immanuel Kant. In these he drew attention to the differences between critical and dogmatic metaphysics, thereby intending to bring metaphysics "down to earth".

A critical metaphysics in Kant's sense is concerned with identifying the a priori structures of subjectivity. Responding to Hume's skepticism, Kant argued that knowledge is a possibility for us insofar as we constitute the object through the categories of the intellect. This means that we participate in 'objectification' by contributing form to our sensible intuition. By arguing thus, Kant thought that he had delimited knowledge (by giving a critical account of the "knowledge of knowledge"), hence, that he had made room for faith.

In this century both familiar and novel arguments against the metaphysical enterprise seem to be strengthened by the

obvious advances of the natural sciences. Many people have been convinced that metaphysics is an endeavor which either is carried on too dogmatically or has become embarrassingly illegitimate. However, these arguments usually address a certain conception of metaphysics only, that is, systems which boast of knowledge (such as a neo-Aristotelian science of first principles, Spinoza's harmonious rationalism, or Hegel's system of absolute Spirit). But they do not necessarily refute more modest conceptions of metaphysics which do not claim to give us knowledge about the totality of Being. Jaspers' view that metaphysics is to be undertaken as the investigation of existential modes of self-awareness vis-à-vis transcendent reality, we can regard as more akin to the philosophizing of Plato, Plotinus, Nicholas of Cusa, Kant, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche than to the philosophic constructions of Aristotle, St. Thomas, or Hegel.[8]

Jaspers, certainly, does not want to support the suggestion that speculation is superfluous to our daily lives. He points out that serious speculation can serve to assure the self of its existential origin in transcendent reality. Scientific knowledge is the same for everyone, but metaphysics leads to an inner certainty which is uniquely individual and which enkindles the participation of a man's whole being.

This existential certainty arises from the experience in which we hear the objects of the world as mediating between us and the reality beyond all objectification, the ultimate reality that is "God". For Jaspers, philosophical

concern with the nature of ultimate reality is of vital importance. He writes: "The decisive factor for all consciousness, for inner action, for the ethos, for freedom, for existence and reason, is whether and how the reality of God is the measure of all things."[9]

The strength of Jaspers' formulation of metaphysics, however, is that it does not confuse the possibility of discourse about God with the possibility of knowledge about God. We cannot know God as an object, but can only become more aware of how we are in relation to transcendent reality through our own self-being. We can know that God is; we cannot determine what God is. What metaphysical speculation is able to further is the exploration of the self's relation to the unfathomable ground of our being. It is how God encounters the individual self that we attempt to conceive metaphysically.

In Jaspers' thought our relations to ultimate reality are mediated by the "cipher". The highest consciousness of Being is made possible when we read objects as ciphers. The apprehension of Being arises only with the awareness of the possible cipher-status of mundane objects. Being cannot be cognized as an object, and would thus be lost to us if it were not possible for objects qua ciphers to convey its presence to us in our empirical actuality.

Overall, Jaspers' intent in his philosophizing is to offset the disintegrative tendencies of the twentieth century by encouraging individuals to communicate with the utmost candor. This will enable us to cooperate in manifesting

the possibilities of human existence. A necessary precondition is to realize that, in time, the reconciliation of conflicting world-views in one comprehensive world-view is impossible. Although he is a finite creature, man's possibilities are infinite, but unhindered communication is essential if man is to realize and appreciate his own potentiality, his mysteriousness (let alone the mystery of Transcendence).

Communication without reserve, with complete openness to the other, is blocked when ciphers are confused with the ostensive objectivities of science. Sincere communication is impeded when we as thinkers fail to maintain a critical consciousness. This failure draws us into ways of thinking which equate being either with what is immanent (positivism), or, contrariwise, with what is purely subjective (idealism). Jaspers wishes to avoid both equations by keeping in mind the intractability of the subject-object dichotomy (although the poles are united in the cipher).

By calling consciousness of the cipher the highest consciousness possible for us, Jaspers means to affirm both the determinate cognitions of science and the individual's attempt to assure himself of Being. In this sense, then, we can speak of the cipher, as does Leonard Ehrlich, as the "culmination of enlightenment"[10]. This is to say that both science and a communicative metaphysics are to be honored as indispensable human endeavors.

In this thesis, therefore, we will be intent upon showing how Jaspers' metaphysics culminates in the "cipher".

Some basic features of Jaspers' philosophizing will be sketched further in Chapter I so as to prepare the reader for a more detailed examination of the cipher in the remaining text. We will investigate the stages of the subject-object correlation in Chapter II. This will bring forth the foundational ideas of Jaspers' metaphysical thinking. Discussion in Chapter III will center on the ambiguity, the universality, and the historicity of the cipher. And in Chapter IV, we will look at Jaspers' "last cipher", i.e., foundering, in an attempt to determine what he means by his idea of eternalization. In the light of this "whole" discussion we will return to our leading questions once again.

CHAPTER I

Existentialism and Jaspers' Existenz-philosophy

Usually, Jaspers is introduced as one of the initiators of twentieth century "Existentialism". He notes himself that his book Psychologie der Weltanschauungen (1919) was, in retrospect, the first document associated with this "so-called" philosophical movement.[1] It may be correct, then, in some circles, to trace Existentialism to Jaspers, but let us not label him an "Existentialist" without further ado.

Referring to Jaspers as such is problematic for at least four reasons. First, Jaspers disclaims the label because it implies that he teaches some sort of doctrine, a body of discursive knowledge which can be mastered. He, however, appeals to his listeners to engage in philosophical communication. Second, what is this movement we so hastily dub "Existentialism"? Only Sartre, and this in but one period of his life, "enjoyed" the term. Thirdly, to define such a movement ab extra, and then to use it as an interpretive device, is not always useful. For is it not difficult to arrive at criteria of classification that are not, in the end, arbitrary or idiosyncratic? The sedimentation resulting from our classifying tends to cover-up what is there to be gleaned, i.e., what everyone got so excited about in the first place.

But these three reasons bring us to the most important one for not calling Jaspers an Existentialist. This is that

his idea of a philosophia perennis, a philosophical faith, speaks against such classifications. By this idea Jaspers means the endeavor on the part of individuals throughout history to bring to light true self-being. It is an endeavor which each person has to undertake for him or herself. Jaspers writes:

> This is why we can say that throughout the scores of centuries of Western thought we have been living in a single philosophy, if by this philosophia perennis we mean the self-knowledge of true being. And we can say no one has it, that it is real only if in each succeeding generation it will be reborn, transformed, in individuals--if each one, for all he knows about the thoughts of the past, has the truth from his fundament and from his present, in this historicity which no one knows from without. 2

Jaspers believes that the philosophic impulses can be awakened in each person: through communication. But no other person can philosophize for me. In my own inner being, in my present situations, I am to actualize truth. The only way to become aware of what philosophy is, is to begin to philosophize.

A philosophizing in Jaspers' sense involves three levels of communication. In the inner dialogue of self-reflection we "speak" with ourselves; we enter into interpersonal relationships (with both antagonists and protagonists); and, we communicate with the men and women of the past (and future) through participation in research. Through research we discover the possibilities opened up by the accomplishments of previous thinkers. Thus, a philosophia perennis is not a teaching, but an enlivening activity; it is the search for the most lucid self-to-self communication. As such, it is an unfinished search.

Jaspers claims no more for his philosophical work than that it is his personal formulation and attempt at the communication of a philosophy which grows out of the individual's own inner action. He is attempting to communicate himself and not a dogma. Jaspers does not seek to promulgate an absolute truth although he does work "on behalf" of his ideas.[3] Since Jaspers understands philosophizing as grappling with oneself and with others in communication, he will highlight the unique fashion in which thinkers philosophize.

In terms of Jaspers' own philosophy, it is well summarized in the following passage:

> Existenz-philosophy is the way of thought by means of which man seeks to become himself; it makes use of expert knowledge while at the same time going beyond it. This way of thought does not cognize objects, but elucidates and makes actual the being of the thinker. Brought into a state of suspense by having transcended the cognitions of the world (as the adoption of a philosophical attitude towards the world) that fixate being, it appeals to its own freedom (as the elucidation of Existenz) and gains space for its own unconditioned activity through conjuring up Transcendence (as metaphysics). [4]

We see that his philosophizing involves three stages of "transcending": 1) the determination of the limits of scientific knowledge and thereby the clearing of a "space" for philosophy; 2) the elucidation of self-being in which the thinker strives to actualize himself; and 3) the attainment of an awareness of Transcendence through metaphysical speculation. These stages lead us to the cipher. At this point, let us introduce Jaspers' central terms: Existenz, Reason, and the Encompassing (Transcendence).

Discussion of Central Terms

For Jaspers, philosophic terms carry fathomless symbolic

content. Even the most all-embracing and systematic exegesis will not make further interpretation redundant. In his words: "All basic philosophic contents are, not so much definitions, but rather comprehensive symbolic apperceptions, which not even the most detailed of rational systems can fully explain."[5] The content of our philosophizing can be conveyed by universal terms only in an indirect manner. Hence, philosophizing will always be indirect communication.

Philosophic terms are referents for what must be existentially (i.e., immediately) apprehended. They are "symbols" which deepen in meaning the more we experience the reality for which they are but the signs. Language, according to Jaspers, is our "common achievement" whereby we are enabled to express what can only be objectified metaphorically. The highest knowledge is not that of definite, systematically congruent concepts, but "lies in apperceptions and images that carry infinite meanings and bring to us the language of reality."[6] Language is our enciphering. It is the feat of objectification, but it moves only on the surface of our being; in language we express our self-becoming. We communicate symbolically our depth experience. We are poets at heart. But "words actually have their meaning only in connected thoughts." Philosophic terms, therefore, will gain their meaning in accord with the contexts in which they are used. On the whole, they remain ciphers.

1. Existenz

Language gives us the impression we are talking about some thing when we speak about the self; this leads us to

believe we are all aware of what this thing is. But the language-user cannot truly be objectified. It is the self which is conscious by means of objectification, but it cannot be "grasped" in any objectivity. It is only apparently that we are able to formulate what the "self" is. Nevertheless, experience of the self arises through thought; we can transcend beyond thought (by means of thought) to a consciousness that is no longer objectifiable. This sense of self is what Jaspers calls "eternity by way of the moment":[7] the self lives from its source. This is the self qua Existenz.

When we speak about Existenz, we will be speaking about freedom; our goal is to bring light to the experience of unshackled selfhood which manifests in decision. Existenz, the authentic self, does not lie wholly in subjectivity, but appears in the intertwining of subjectivity and objectivity.

In Reason and Existenz Jaspers writes:

> The words "reason" and "Existenz" are chosen because for us they express in the most penetrating and pure form the problem of the clarification of the dark, the grasping of the bases out of which we live, presupposing no transparency, but demanding the maximum of clarity. 8

"Existenz" is not meant to be intelligible as a "concept"; it is not a kind of category, but a depth of self-being.

> The word "Existenz" through Kierkegaard has taken on a sense through which we look into infinite depths at what defies all determinate knowledge. The word is not to be taken in its worn-out sense as one of the many synonyms for "being"; it either means nothing, or is to be taken with its Kierkegaardian claims. 9

By stressing the term's "Kierkegaardian claims", Jaspers desires to differentiate between the scholastic understanding of man's "being" as something knowable, a concrete, individual existent (existentia), and the understanding of man's "being" as the actualization of freedom in decision: a self-choosing (Existenz).[10]

Kierkegaard develops his idea of the self as the synthesis of the infinite and the finite, temporality and eternity, freedom and necessity principally in The Sickness Unto Death.[11] These are polar relations which "come together" in man. As "Anti-Climacus" wrote, the self is an essential "synthesis" in the tension which is established between the "poles" constitutive of self-being. These poles are dialectically related through an "infinite reflection" which opens the self to decision. Hence, Kierkegaard's "self" is a radical openness beyond any temporal fixation.[12] It is a self-becoming.

But, for Kierkegaard, not only is Existenz a reflexive relation, it is in relation to a third party, God. The true self is, at the same time, the most primitive and yet the highest consciousness of a relationship with God. Kierkegaard writes that "the self is potentiated in the ratio of the measure proposed for the self, and infinitely potentiated when God is the measure. The more conception of God, the more self."[13] In The Point of View Kierkegaard adds: "It is neither more nor less than the generic human inwardness which every man may have, without regarding it as an official distinction which it were a crime to hide and a duty to

proclaim. . .".[14] Existenz, we can see, is synonymous with what Kierkegaard calls the "God-relationship".

In this brief account of Kierkegaard's conception of "Existenz" we can see at work three ideas which Jaspers develops as well. These are: 1) Self-reflection is a movement "through and beyond" thought; it is an infinite flow of interpretation, and the decisive proviso of freedom. "Infinite reflection, therefore, is, precisely through its endlessly active dialectic, the condition of freedom."[15] 2) The authentic self is awakened to its encounter with a transcendent reality. Whereas Kierkegaard speaks about God, Jaspers talks about the relation of Existenz with Transcendence. And, 3) in the spontaneity of freedom the authentic self comes to be expressed in decision.

For Jaspers, our awareness of Existenz depends upon our becoming aware of the cipher-status of everything empirical. The ultimate reality that is both ground and goal is experienced only through transcending from the self-evident object to the symbol which both veils and unveils. "To live deeply rooted in symbols is to live in a reality which as yet we do not know but can appreciate in its symbolic form."[16] In time this reality speaks only through the symbol; this reality is the ground of time itself.

Existenz only comes to be in freedom. Yet, according to Jaspers, freedom is fundamentally paradoxical in that the more decisive my sense of true self-being, the more I realize that who I am unconditionally is a "gift" from Transcendence. I receive myself in the concrete situations

of my historical existence. When I make a free, uncaused decision, what will come to me therewith will be incalculable. Jaspers writes:

> The problem of freedom--namely, that it does not have its being in itself, but rather that the more decisively freedom actually becomes conscious of itself the more it knows itself as granted to itself, and that freedom can fail to appear to itself and therefore points to Transcendence as its origin--is discussed in almost all of my philosophical writings.[17]

Freedom originates in Transcendence, but Jaspers does not wish to confuse freedom with Transcendence itself. It is a possibility for us because, in time, we can still decide what we are to become. "In transcendence freedom ceases because decision has an end. . .".[18] But, if it is the case that I can only be given to myself, then the task in front of me is to prepare for this possibility. This is the task of "self-searching", and Reason is its activation.

2. Reason

Kant's distinction between Verstand, the "intellect", and Vernunft, "Reason", leads us to two ways of looking at 'meaning', namely, "the way of psychological observation and of empirical knowledge, which establishes something; and the other way of appealing and conjuring designs of possibilities of meaning, a way which appeals to freedom."[19] We establish meaning qua knowledge through the constitutive categories of the intellect. But we also ascertain meaning by imagining the possibilities which lie open to us in our day to day situations. This second way moves in "ideas".

Through the intellect we structure the raw sense data of our empirical existence. It operates as if everything

that is for us lies on one 'plane'. For the intellect it is self-evident that "the universe exists"; it cognizes the universe as a whole in a "world image". It absolutizes objective being. "What casts doubt upon this absolutizing of the intellect is the thought that objective being consists, not of itself, but of being for a knowing subject, as it appears to that subject."[20] For the intellect, being is that which lasts in time; it is that which endures.

The intellect actually contains no content in and of itself, but is what gives us our formative categories, the "a priori" structures of consciousness, which serve as the "foundation of all truthfulness". As such, it is the possibility of our having knowledge. The intellect, or "consciousness-as-such", is "the receiving apparatus which in its categories provides for every objectivity a means for becoming objective."[21]

The categories are communicable classifications (concepts) which enable us to objectify sense experience. They are presupposed in every interchange between conscious beings. These categorial universals (they can be thought of as formal "constraints") are the preconditions of communicability. They are not, however, adequate for circumscribing the historically unique. Our cognition, our transmissible experience, has its source in the incommunicable.

Reason, on the other hand, is a dialectical interpreting guided by ideas. In the idea Reason seeks the unity of Being; but in its search it comes up against the non-rational, that

reality which is impenetrable to thought. Unlike the intellect, Reason is that "thinking" which is not "knowing" because it is not confined within a methodological structure. "The movement of reason is, then, thinking to the limits, and the transcending of these limits in thought by means of ideas which seek realization in historic actuality."[22] It is perhaps appropriate to refer to Reason as the quest for the 'Idea of ideas'.[23]

If we follow the movement of Reason in its transcending of limits, we can attain to an awareness of self-origin. In our search for truth Jaspers tells us, therefore, that we must take two steps.

> . . .first, by acquiring the scientific method which enables us to see through the untruth of 'total' knowledge and pseudo-mythical objectivisations, and which, positively, provides the foundation of all truthfulness; and secondly, by taking a leap into the imageless, unobjectifiable, self-impelling source of our self, which is Reason. [24]

Realizing Reason in one's life depends upon <u>leaping</u> from categorial thought to what is unobjectifiable because it does not lie in the subject-object split, but rather, "athwart" both poles. Reason is the movement in which the self transcends beyond all objectivity.

For Jaspers, Reason does not appear on the scene without freedom, but only by the leap of philosophical decision. As a decision, Reason arises from the choice to seek true being once it has been realized that Being is nowhere an object for us. It becomes apparent that "objectivity" is problematic; a reversal in thinking occurs wherein we become newly aware of our subject-ness.

Jaspers describes Reason in many formulations. He speaks, for example, of the will to boundless communication; of the will to unity (its basic characteristic); and of the age-old essence of philosophy. So described, Reason is always the attempt to illuminate that which encloses the subject-object split, within which everything that is for us comes to be. Jaspers does not view Reason as a "faculty" as in the classical tradition from Aristotle to Hegel (including Kant). Rather, he identifies Reason with the "whole man"; Reason is the bond which unites all the creative processes actualized in man. For Jaspers, Reason is in polar relation to Existenz; these are the two "great poles of our being".[25]

Reason seeks the essential hidden in objectivity. It yearns to ascend to the One by means of transcendental Ideas, by bringing into a dynamic interrelation all possible objectifications. However, in its disclosing movement, Reason will break out of all the constructions of the intellect into the incomprehensible. It will founder; but this can lead to a transformation of consciousness when we take this foundering seriously. We realize a "not-knowing".

> How this is to be achieved, this is the task of philosophy. Thinking within the world of appearance leads to limits. When these latter become clear on the intellectual level, there remain two possibilities: the not-knowing which remains indifferent and does not take the unknowable into consideration; and, the possible jump to another level of thought which, however, is reached only simultaneously with one's own essential transformation. 26

Reason makes possible a "not-knowing" which is communicable only in the form of an appeal for freedom. It is the choice

to be guided by the "primary symbolic experience" of eternity.

3. The Encompassing; Transcendence

The Encompassing (das Umgreifende) is Jaspers' word for the infinite, present reality which encloses the subject-object split. Introduced conceptually in Reason and Existenz, the Encompassing emerges as the fundament of Jaspers' philosophical logic. A "philosophical" logic, in contradistinction to a "rational" logic (concerned with the categories of the intellect), is one in which it is acknowledged that transcendent reality is beyond cognition; it is a logic which seeks to allow for the continual development of meaning. We seek to understand the modes of our transcending without falling into the untruth of fixed thought and without forgetting that the "really real" is conceptually inaccessible.

In his commentary on Anaximander there is an interesting passage which points to the connection between the Greek verb, periechein, and Jaspers' concept of the Encompassing. It is of interest to us since Jaspers replaces ontology with periechontology. In discussing Anaximander's concept of the apeiron Jaspers writes:

> The meaning of the word is infinite, boundless, undetermined. . . .Aristotle interprets: . . . It cannot be a particular thing--if it were a particular thing, the whole could not spring from it. It must encompass (periechein) everything, it cannot be encompassed (periechomenon). 27

The "essential character" of the apeiron, Jaspers goes on to say, "is that while free from opposition, it is the source

of oppositions." The Encompassing, similarly to the apeiron, cannot be apprehended in determinate form; it is prior to all determination.

The Encompassing does not and cannot appear as an object for us. It is what embraces all conceivable horizons without itself becoming a horizon; no particular horizon remains visible, and the subject-object distinction is transcended. Jaspers writes in Reply to My Critics:

> I am urging to go beyond the division between subject and object, between the I and the object, and with it beyond the alternatives, which are erected between subjectivity and objectivity where the one is constantly played against the other. My thesis is: Reality is neither the object nor the subject, but that which encompasses both, the Encompassing which is illuminated in the division between subject and object. In this division, however, both have their changing forms which belong to each other. 28

The subject-object diremption occurs in Being, thus, Being is antecedent whatever appears to consciousness.

We become aware of the "prior actuality of Transcendence"[29] in various modes of the Encompassing. In each mode of the Encompassing the subject-object relationship will be present, but their correlation will be different. The passage continues:

> . . .For our purposes the main point is that there are basically different modes of object-being, different for a subject according to the specific aspect of the Encompassing. These various modes must be kept distinct, if confusion is to be avoided.

There are three steps (three philosophical decisions) involved in the clarification of the modes of the Encompassing. We move from the general idea of the Encompassing (which first arises in wonder) to distinguishing between the En-

compassing that we ourselves are and the Encompassing that is the world. We next distinguish the modes of the Encompassing that we are: existence (Dasein), "consciousness-as-such" (Bewüsstsein überhaupt), and spirit (Geist). But lastly, and most importantly, we move from immanence (objectness) to Transcendence.[30]

When we elucidate the Encompassing, according to Jaspers, the meaning of every cognition takes on greater depth permeated by the Being which lies beyond all conceivable limits. This is the perennial unfolding of the One and the many.

> . . .one must learn, however, that the Encompassing is present in many ways--in existence, in consciousness-as-such, in Existenz, in the spirit, in the world--, and that all these ways finally point to one, the Encompassing of everything Encompassing, which nowhere is definitively understood or possessed, and which yet leads everywhere where our path reaches its essential possibility. This is why I tried to illuminate the Encompassing in its manifoldness as well as in its unity. [31]

The illumination of the Encompassing in the subject-object division proceeds by means of a threefold thought movement which moves from a consideration of each pole to a consideration of the two entwined together in an ideal unity, the "widest realm of possibility"[32].

Jaspers considers this thought movement an "analogy to Kantian transcendental thinking". Referring to Kant he writes: "He thinks of the Idea in its objective meaning, as subjective impulse, as the methodical source of systematic investigation. The Idea in this triple sense shifts its meaning according to the relationship of the discussions, but in such fashion that a whole develops in which the Idea

undergoes this necessary change of meaning."[33] In this movement Reason relates both poles to the nonobjective "whole" which is the source of all meaning. Our philosophizing proceeds from two presuppositions[34]: the first one is that all objectivity is to be seen as relative; secondly, that our final support lies only in the "distant One".

The task of the philosopher is to apprehend the reality of the Encompassing out of which he, as a temporal-eternal unity, has originated through Reason. By "<u>becoming one</u> with the <u>temporally concrete appearance of reality</u>" in which he stands, the philosopher is able to recognize the possibilities which lie open to him. Through Reason he will become aware of "an Objectivity (<u>Objektivität</u>) in which love has its fulfillment."[35] This is to experience the reality that is the source of all that is.

CHAPTER II

Objectivity

If we are to orient ourselves in the world successfully, we must be guided by what we can know. On the basis of our consolidated knowledge we prepare for the possibility of unconditional action. But a critical examination of "objectivity" will lead to the realization, according to Jaspers, that the meaning of science is existential and cannot be fully explained from within its own sphere. It is possible Existenz which seeks to know scientifically; knowledge serves as a springboard for the transcending of a self-present Existenz. In unconditional action Existenz expresses itself in the presence of Transcendence.[1]

Science serves as methodical communication[2]; it is universally valid knowledge communicated by way of the ratiocinations of the intellect. But, since the scientific object is determinate, science will involve the frustration of the metaphysical impulse to totality. The scientific endeavor is to be complemented by philosophical communication wherein individual speaks to individual; this communication is historic and calls for commitment if we are to experience Being in our interpretive movements. Contrary to the scientific approach, when we are philosophizing, the object is imbued with our self-being; "instead of being known, it acquires a voice."[3]

The metaphysical impulse would seem to be Reason since it is the "will to unity". It is an impulse towards communica-

tive manifestation.

> It underlies our will to know--the will that makes us see a scientific unity in knowledge as such--because the aim of all knowledge is to reach the limits where we can know specifically what we cannot know. . . .Insofar as science is meant philosophically, as knowledge in the unity of knowledge, it is not self-fulfilling; it finds its fulfillment when Existenz, in the process of world orientation, is cast back upon itself by that orientation and is thus opened to transcendence. 4

Although we must constantly assimilate the findings of the sciences, we must beware of absolutizing a scientific world-view. In the sciences we know what we are doing to the degree that we have limited the variables. By doing so, we circumscribe a domain wherein our investigation can proceed methodologically. But, as knowledge in the unity of knowledge, science is limited by that reality we cannot know. When we recognize the limits of a scientific world orientation, philosophizing arises.

We cannot have knowledge of the "whole" that is being-in-itself even though, when we think about it (or, rather, make the attempt to think about it), we move in some mode of objectivity. It is only in the cipher, in the disappearance of the objectivity, that Being is present. It is because the objectivity is sublimated in an experience of Being that we speak of the cipher as an "absolute objectivity".

Whenever we attempt to put into words our experience of Being, as it is present to us in the cipher, we are attempting to speak about that which is impervious to all objectification. Our talk will always be metaphorical: we must resort to categories to speak about that reality.

Let us at this point distinguish three senses in which to understand 'objectivity' as relative: first of all, there is the object (that which is ineluctably other); secondly, a category (a mode of objectivity for "consciousness-as-such"); and thirdly, the "idea" (arising in the sphere of the mind). All three "relative" objectivities can become ciphers when they are held in the suspension between the subject and the object. That which is objective becomes a cipher, an "Objectivity"; this "Objectivity" is the full presence of Being, "reality itself, i.e., eternity in time."[5]

The cipher is for Existenz alone. In the cipher Existenz hears its transcendence. In Reply to My Critics Jaspers writes:

> What really is at stake is this: I cannot think without objectivity. What I think and what I know moves necessarily into some form of objectivity. This latter is either the matter at hand or else refers to it. If it refers only, that which is meant is something else and is insofar--even though not adequately objective--nevertheless an intended objective as something which is not I. But, whenever objectivity refers to what I am, or can be, myself, there whatever stands inadequately over against me in the objective, whatever is indirectly hit upon in thinking is, at the same time, what I am myself and, therefore, what I can fulfill in thinking in a way radically different from any other inadequate objective thought: by means of my inner activity, by means of what I am, of what I can be. . . [6]

In the first half of this passage Jaspers is speaking about what we have called relative objectivities; in the latter half he is speaking about an "absolute objectivity." The cipher is not to be separated from a possible Existenz. Not communicable as objective knowledge, the cipher is "a function of the sense of being"[7].

Both positivism and idealism are identified by Jaspers as claims that being-in-itself can be known; they are world-views which become conclusive.[8] Being is seen as "objective being" by positivists while for the idealists "the being of the mind" is the "whole". Both perspectives unfold on the basis of "entirety and universality", but both dissolve the subject-object dichotomy in favor of one of the poles. They thus miss the whole altogether. But Jaspers thinks that the two positions are to be eschewed only when they are absolutized; when understood as relative, they are both true. In Jaspers' "philosophy of existential self-elucidation" positivism and idealism are dialectically related.

Existenz is the interrelation of the subjective and the objective in such a fashion that all modes of the subjective and objective will have been broken through. "Consciousness of Being lies simultaneously in the grasping of the object and in the consummation of subjectivity."[9] This consciousness of Being will be but a momentary experience because of the bilateral tendency of phenomenal-Existenz either towards objectivity and away from subjectivity, or vice versa.

Because the self cannot be merely an existing thing, its appearance occurs in an ever-present tension. This tension can yield privileged moments of consciousness when Existenz communicates with Existenz. In our philosophizing, and this is crucial for understanding Jaspers, "the question of subjectivity and objectivity is overcome by elucidating the original being of Existenz with other Existenz--a being

from which no man can any longer step back for an objective survey."[10] We can apprehend our authentic selfhood only in communication when we are open to what arises from our inner depths. When Existenz speaks to Existenz, Transcendence is present in the cipher of their communication.

When we are conscious, we always find ourselves directed at objects which we mean. Consciousness is both intentional (objective consciousness) and self-reflexive (self-consciousness). Self-consciousness and the consciousness of objects are bound together. But consciousness, as "fulfilled real consciousness", is historic; it undergoes transformation in the course of the generations. "Historically changing consciousness not only happens, as does a natural process; it remembers, it affects itself, it engenders itself in its history. Man actively lives the life of his successive generations, instead of merely suffering it in a repetition of the same."[11]

Intentional consciousness is consciousness-as-such; it underlies established knowledge. Self-consciousness is an individual's sense of existing. Our historically changing consciousness is the mind; here we have the "ideas" of Reason. The mind is the historic expression of freedom through the intermediacy of ideas; its historicity, however, is rooted in Existenz.

"Objectivity" and "subjectivity" are ambiguous terms. We can lessen the ambiguity by thinking of both as correlated in stages. The objective comes to be seen as an object in time and space, as a necessary conception, or as an idea.

The idea presupposes the concept which, in turn, presupposes the external object, the "opposite other". Each stage of objectivity is correlated with a corresponding stage of subjectivity. Pure subjectivity is incommunicable. "Subjectivity makes me seek objectivity. . . .Object, validity, and the idea give me consciousness, solidity, and substance."[12] Dasein, consciousness-as-such, and spirit are the stages of subjectivity.

The highest stage of consciousness, however, occurs when subjectivity and objectivity interpenetrate and Being is present. At this stage the cipher and Existenz are one. To discern the three stages of the subject-object relation is the beginning of a dialectical movement which can peak in the cipher wherein a possible Existenz awakens to Transcendence.

The dialectical movement protects the tension inherent in the subject-object dichotomy, but is able to bring about a transformation of consciousness in the experience of authentic illumination (Jaspers' "absolute consciousness").

> Since Existenz must pursue its realization in subjectivity and objectivity, pervading both, its target in the dialectically inconclusive whole is any instance when the two become one. There Existenz finds itself; imperfect as temporal existence, it knows perfection only as fulfillment of the moment. 13

The task of our philosophizing is to bring the mystery of this One reality, this dialectically inconclusive whole, into consciousness; this is to discern an infinite depth in every object. The cipher, then, is not an objectification, but a movement of consciousness in which all the stages

of the subject-object relation are relativized in light of the experience of Transcendence.

That there are stages to the relation between subjectivity and objectivity would seem to be an extension of the view argued for by Kant, namely, that the subjective is a transcendental pre-condition of the objective. It extends Kant's position (his noumenal-phenomenal distinction) by pointing out that the subject and object are related in varying ways ranging from "alien otherness to harmonious identification."[14] Each stage is related to a mode of transcending.

When the object and the subject are radically distinguished, the "natural consciousness of being" is transcended in the leap from scientific cognition to a philosophical world orientation. Next, existential self-elucidation occurs from the side of the subject in communication with other selves. The third stage of transcending is metaphysics wherein we seek to experience Being by reading ciphers.

> The pure cipher speaks for a consciousness of Being for which everything objective and subjective is relative as a phenomenon in the movement, and sensual tangibility is overcome as the last stage of Being. This state of the consciousness of Being, in being one with all stages and modes of objectivity and subjectivity, would at the same time be gliding with respect to each one of its definite forms. 15

In the cipher the transcending movement of Reason brings all stages of objectivity and subjectivity into unity.

In metaphysics we aim at transcending objectivity "formally" in the movement of Reason. This formal transcending is expressed in ideas which move Reason from the thinkable to the unthinkable. Reason moves beyond the intellect by

absolutizing any one of the categories, i.e., the modes of objectivity, in an attempt to conceive Absolute Being. Each absolutization founders in rational antinomies. For example, when we conceive Being as the "First Cause", we are trying to think of an uncaused cause. Causality becomes paradoxical.

In formal transcending thought voids itself. Jaspers writes: "I come to think: It is conceivable that there are things which are not conceivable. This expresses a step which my thinking no sooner takes than it ceases to be thinking. Thinking sets itself a limit it cannot cross--and yet, by thinking it, it appeals for a crossing of the limit."[16] We express ourselves in negations: no conceivable objectification is applicable to Transcendence.

But, when the objectivity becomes a cipher, there occurs a "substantial" transcending. The objectivity is endowed with the self-being of Existenz in the freedom of its relation to Transcendence. Substantial transcending is the goal of our metaphysics; in the cipher I hear the possibilities of my present historicity. "It is only in the absolute consciousness of Existenz that a direct language of transcendence is truly substantially present. It will be heard by an individual at a singular historic moment."[17] In time I experience the cipher as the reality of my own self-imperative: BECOME YOURSELF.

"Yes, but, what exactly is the cipher?"

We have seen that Jaspers' major thesis is that Being lies neither in the object nor in the subject, but rather, is prior to the subject-object split. Through the mediation

of the one pole in the other, Being is fulfilled in an immediate "Objectivity" which rests in both poles. The cipher, as an objectivity imbued with subjectivity, brings Being to present consciousness. The cipher is a mediation. Jaspers tells us that we come into contact with Being in the cipher only when Existenz is alert and listening.[18]

The mediation between the subject and the object occurs in all acts of recognizing (Erkennen); "knowing" is the dialectical accomplishment of this mediation (Vermittlung). It occurs in three stages which come to be as one in the gliding movement of Reason: in movements from one pole to the other; through operations of one upon another; and then, "dialectic changes of one into the other" (Bewegungen; Operationen; dialecktische Ümschlage). But, thus far, we are always dealing with specific objectivities; the cipher only appears when Reason founders in this dialectical movement.

The cipher is not the subject; nor is it the object; it is the permeation of objectivity by subjectivity such that Being is present in the "whole" (im Ganzen). The ground of the division between subject and object is mediated through both poles and comes to presence in the cipher. "This task of actually taking hold of Being is fulfilled by the symbol (the metaphor or the cipher-status)."

The ground that is Being itself cannot be anything known by us as it is what makes possible the subject-object polarity, and hence, our consciousness. The polar relationship of subject and object is what underlies our comprehension of definite objects as well as of our unique subjective acts.

Our orientation in the world must respect this polarity if it is to remain meaningful. However, this state of affairs does not satisfy us because it does not bring us into touch (Berührung) with the actuality of Being. The experience of the ground, if it is to arise, will be mediated through both poles at one and the same time.

The experience of the ground is the experience of the world's mystery (Geheimnis). In our philosophizing we set ourselves the task of penetrating this mystery. We want to bring to full consciousness the mystery of "the world and everything in it". We learn to see the "infinite depth" (die unendliche Tiefe) of every object; its inexhaustible significance is "revealed in an unfoldment". We grow astonished, and find our astonishment increasing when we hear Being itself speak. To illuminate the mystery is to become more aware of it as "essential" (wesentlich). It cannot be solved -- it is not a riddle. On the contrary, the more light we bring to it, the more profound it becomes. But without the cipher, this reality would be completely hidden.

We fail to come into contact with "Being in its essence" (Seins im Grunde) if we restrict ourselves to the investigation of empirical reality (Seiendes in der Welt). Knowledge is always of the particular (Einzelnerkenntnis); we cannot have cognition of what is the ground of our self-being. However, we experience this ground as essential reality (Wirklichkeit) in the cipher.

In our formal transcending we absolutize the category in order to bring rational thought to the point where it collapses logically. "We bestir ourselves in order not to

fall victim to any category." We seek to experience Transcendence in a "heightened presentness". "Whatever there is for us, becomes more for us than it seemed at first to be. It becomes transparent, it becomes a symbol."[19] In the cipher we find ourselves opened to, and at the same time, filled with Being.

It is the transformation of objectivity in our transcending that 'cipherizes' the whole. In that it is an objectivity held in suspension, the cipher is unlike any specific object. Although the "element" of the cipher is "the very definiteness of what is objective", its cipher-status is lost if we fix the objectivity. To apprehend Transcendence we cannot let the cipher last in any particular form.

There are three modes of comprehending the impermanence of the cipher although each mode will be a form of disappearance (rather than a form of continuity).

> First: as an object, whether conceptual or visual, the metaphysical objectivity is not the object itself, but a symbol.
> Second: for the intellect a clear conception of the metaphysical objectivity will lead to its logical collapse; the conception proves to be a circle, or a tautology, or a self-contradiction.
> Third: due to the metaphysical intention, it is absolute reality which a free Existenz grasps in finite, empirical reality. The absolute makes the empirical reality seem as though it were not truly real, while in the sense of empirical reality the absolute one is unreal. Being and nonbeing reverse their relationship in constant alternation. [20]

The objectivity is to disappear in the movement of reason and the awakening of Existenz as it is only an image of what in-itself is not objectifiable. If the image is representative of what can also be grasped as an object, it is not a

cipher.

Formal transcending is the disappearance of the objectivity in the movement of reason; substantial transcending occurs when all objectivity is suspended in the hearing of Transcendence. This is to experience the 'border-line' consciousness where rational thought gives way to mystery. A content-full transcending results in our own self-transformation.

The object is suspended in the polarity of subject and object. "This suspension makes possible the consciousness of Being; for this the object is imbued from the depths with spirit. From this depth of Being the object obtains an irreplaceable meaning." Indeed, it is because Transcendence is hidden <u>within</u> the objectivity that it is able to be transformed. Transcendence shows itself in the transformation of the object in its "mode of being an object".

As long as the cipher remains in suspension, it will have three characteristics: communication, essential reality, and infinity. The object speaks for Transcendence; it is the "enkindling in which Being acquires communicative power." Within our empirical existence the cipher makes real what would otherwise be inexperienceable.

> The symbol makes not only clear but <u>real</u> (<u>wirklich</u>) what would otherwise be like nothing. In the groundlessness of empirical realities (<u>Realitäten</u>) we gain a foothold, as it were, through symbols of essential reality. Being is not another reality which is hidden behind empirical realities. 21

Infinity belongs to the cipher because no final interpretation of it can be given. It is the "complete presentness of Being."

We are to realize, however, that talk about the cipher is also a cipher. Although communication is needed to bring the cipher into greater clarity, what we express in language will be "already mistaken in its roots". This is because in language we cannot help but distinguish between the signification and that which is therein signified; but this separation is false when applied to the cipher.

The cipher does not signify a reality beyond itself; it does not stand for Transcendence, but rather, it speaks for Transcendence; we cannot hold on to the objective form. The cipher is a "present reality" which is not "translatable into knowledge of something." Hence, all language is to be seen as metaphorical when communicating this experience of primary immediacy.

Since the cipher is an "inexhaustible signification", we find ourselves in "an endless movement of interpreting" which is not a form of knowledge; this "movement of interpreting" which recognizes that there is no correct interpretation is a "metaphorical act, a game." It is a game because our interpretations remain fluid. Transcendence escapes philosophical denomination. Jaspers writes: "Chiffre ist das Gleichnis, das Sein ist, oder das Sein, das Gleichnis ist."[22]

The cipher is a reality for Existenz; in whatever objectivity Existenz is able to manifest itself, Transcendence will shimmer in the depths. Jaspers tells us that to experience the cipher we have to attain to the space where our knowledge gives way and we become aware of the reality which bounds all possibility of thought. For this reason

he advises approaching the cipher as the language of Transcendence.

The Languages of Transcendence[23]

To refer to the cipher as a language draws our attention to it as a metaphorical expression of essential reality. The cipher as such is a movement in self-exegesis.

> In the world there prevails a universal image-and metaphor-status of things for one another. Our language is a world of metaphors. In the cipher-status, however, that which signifies the cipher is, in fact, not to be separated from it. If I speak of the cipher as an interpreting, then this interpreting is itself a metaphor; being-a-metaphor is a metaphor for the original phenomenon of the revelation of Being in the cipher. 24

The object becomes a cipher for Existenz when it is seen as a metaphor because we are no longer seeing it as simply empirical. It takes on, so to speak, the depth of existential presence. "Through the cipher a participation in Being takes place at varying degrees of proximity or distance."[25]

Jaspers speaks of three languages (or levels of participation). The direct language of Transcendence is substantively present to the "absolute consciousness" of Existenz in the immediacy of its ground-relationship. It is an original hearing which occurs at singular, historic moments when Existenz encounters Transcendence on the boundary of self-awareness where extant limits disappear in the face of ultimate, unbounded reality. For Jaspers the absolute consciousness of Existenz is the existential posture wherein we have suspended all objectivity in the awareness of not-knowing, a not-knowing which gives us assurance, nonetheless, of self-being.

It is possible to experience this not-knowing as fulfilled freedom, as love. "Love is the most incomprehensible reality of absolute consciousness because it is the most groundless and self-understood. It is the source of all substance, the only fulfillment of any quest."[26] Essentially, we are to understand the direct language of Transcendence as the speech of love. The more deeply we love, the more we are love, the more astonishing is our hearing of Transcendence.

We strive to communicate our experience of the direct language by dealing with the "relatively general" aspects of the cipher. When what is heard is understood in a generalized form, we have the second language of Transcendence wherein Existenz communicates with other Existenz. "This second language, that of palpable transmission from Existenz to Existenz, detaches the content from the original hearing and makes transferable--as a narrative, an image, a form, a gesture--what had seemed to be incommunicable." In this language, because we are attempting to express who we are in depths below by means of the surface-word, it is quite possible for one person to register the words another is using, but to fail utterly in comprehending what the other is getting at.

When we take hold of this second language philosophically, we are striving to reach through language to the source of our communication. This is to seek to apprehend the direct language by means of metaphysical speculation. Thereby we seek to improve our hearing of the first language.

This has given us a new language, the third one, that of philosophical communication which attempts to penetrate to the origin in "an incognoscible but cogitative" way.

Jaspers would have us realize more and more profoundly that we hear Transcendence only in our historical experience, in existential situations. Just as empirical knowledge rests on experience, the ascertainment of Transcendence also necessitates experience. In fact, although Transcendence is that which is even without us, in order to encounter it, we must be fully involved in our temporal reality. To hear Transcendence directly requires all modes of our apprehension (and even then it is not predictable): sense perception, "living" awareness of existence, cognitive experience based upon deductive-inductive research, the movement of thought in ideas, and intuition. In other words, the "whole" man is engaged in hearing Transcendence. It is only when we realize the disjointedness of being and no longer accord ultimate significance to our empirical reality that we begin to prepare for the encounter with Transcendence.

The hearing of the first language in primitive immediacy brings empirical existence to transparency. Because this is an uplifting of the self at the boundary of cognition (where even thought becomes a cipher), it is not communicable except symbolically. It "puts me into a mode of being other than a purely positive existence. It implies a translation of being from mere existence into eternity, which is beyond knowing."[27] Reality comes to be a cipher in a not-knowing which impels the individual's search for self-being. "In

the belief in symbols there remains beyond all reflection an unreflectedness. Essential reality reveals itself only to our naïveté. This is restored again and again. . .".[28] The cipher is always experienced in its present particularity in a moment of existential readiness; we do not understand it conceptually, but by participating in its reality in the here and now of our existence.

The immediacy of Transcendence is conveyed by the cipher in those moments of wordless self-consciousness. We experience the "oneness of essential reality and intellectual certainty, of immediacy and reflection, of conditioned being and free responsibility, of force and suspension."[29] It is the experience of this immediacy, Jaspers tells us, which prompts the creation of our languages. We will to express original self-being, and thus, to touch for a moment who we are in the flow of time. Being then is not seen as a world beyond our present existence, but rather, as interpenetrating empirical reality. The empirically real becomes simultaneously mythical. The world is apprehended with "the significance conferred on it by transcendence."

According to Jaspers, this is how the world is seen through the eyes of love. When Existenz experiences loving communication with another self-being, reality is mythicized and death abrogated in the present consciousness of the eternal in time. The more satisfying our communication, Jaspers would say, the more we are opened to the infinity of love. In his words:

> Communication with another, aimed at myself and at him as phenomena of original self-being, brings

> me closer and closer--and my yearning grows, finding fulfillment only in those moments when death is no more. To be empirically close to a person, and thus only to intensify my longing, to quench it not until our empirical proximity will serve as a transcendent link between us, without an imaginary beyond--this is metaphysical love; and for that love there is mythical reality.[30]

Assuredly, is it not the case that communication is endless because love is infinite? We will not be able to answer in the affirmative if we have not experienced the transformation of ourselves in the love of which Jaspers speaks.

The reading of ciphers involves an "unfathomable dialectics"[31]. This is a dialectic which does not reduce Existenz to pure subjectivity, and which does not allow Transcendence to become an objective being. It is a dialectics which makes use of the expert knowledge of the scientist to reach the space where thought collapses in front of the unknown.

If Existenz were to be thought of as a subject without an object, and Transcendence as completely other, we would be left with two worlds essentially unrelated. Eventually, Jaspers claims, restriction to empirical reality would eclipse ideas of God and we would grow unconcerned about our freedom. "Once immanence and transcendence have become completely heterogeneous," he writes, "we drop transcendence. With transcendence and immanence conceived as downright otherness for one another, they must--if transcendence is not to go down--evolve their own present dialectics for us in the cipher, as immanent transcendence."[32] The objectivities which grow out of our orientation in the world are dialectically related in the movement of reason.

In reading ciphers we move back and forth in the three languages, but it is the experience of the direct language of Transcendence in which the other two languages come to fruition. The first language is the actual hearing of the cipher in the present depths of the thinker. In this language he becomes aware of Being as more than what he knows himself to be. To hear this language cannot be a matter of routine planning. Method comes into play only in the other languages, and not in the original encounter with Transcendence.

Every cipher, as a phenomenon of Transcendence, allows us to experience the ground of our self-being. "In the symbol I become one with that to which, cast back upon myself, I relate at the same time. Thus there are differences of proximity and distance, but every symbol remains one sole aspect of transcendence."[33] All ciphers will not speak with equal immediacy to every Existenz, but every cipher springs from the Being which encompasses <u>all in all</u>.

CHAPTER III

Ambiguity of the Cipher[1]

When any object is seen as unified with Transcendence, we have a cipher which in its "immanent transcendence" is inseparable from what it signifies. Unlike the symbolic object per se, the cipher does not represent something else; as we have seen, it does not stand for Transcendence, but is the actual presence of Transcendence to a possible Existenz. If we do understand the cipher as referring to that which is different from itself, we lose the presence of Transcendence.

Interpretation splits what is to be experienced as a unity into a sign and its meaning. The meaning is then understood in terms of symbolic relations which are cognitively assessed. But, this is to permit the reading of ciphers to decline into equivocal cognitions. The cipher comes to be translated into something universally valid. When this happens, the truth of Transcendence is given up.

Rather, the cipher is to be approached as a genuine unity which interweaves what is separated logically, the subjective and the objective. Since it is not a relative objectivity, but, on the contrary, an absolute one, the cipher cannot be clarified by means of interpretative exegesis because symbolic relationships are transcended. If the cipher is to lead to a greater lucidity of consciousness, the signified and the significator must

be experienced as a unity.

All objects express being, but only persons are able to express being communicatively (understanding "communication" in Jaspers' sense). The "communicative expression", as opposed to "expression of being in general", is the intention to convey something, namely, "meaning with transferable contents"[2]. In language we seek to reproduce consciously what is our original self-being in a non-cognitive immediacy. We seek to communicate our own existential reading of the cipher script. But, to hear communicative expressions aright, we must realize that the human being is not only an empirical being, but is also a subject which experiences freedom.

When we penetrate the communicative expressions of men, we hear more closely the expressions of free beings, but we cannot bring closure to what is being communicated. We cannot know freedom except through our own beings. Jaspers, referring to the perception of a man's expression, writes: "Insofar as I truly penetrate, however, there will be a leap in the expression: it becomes possibility in a deeper sense as I get to the freedom I can see as the nobility and rank of a present existence; I get all the way to the ground of a man's being, which is like a past choice that he himself made before the beginning of time."[3]

We have remarked before that the will to authentic communication is the existential source of our quest for the certainty of true self-being. Our awareness of Transcendence, our uplifting in love, and our search for peace

are all rooted in communication. Taken as a whole, our communication is the struggle to manifest the truth which we are in our unconditional decisions, those which actualize our inner imperatives. The nonobjectiveness of Transcendence will be brought to mind in those moments of our most lucid communication.

> The communicative expression is encompassing, since it is the means whereby all other expression too is translated into a communicable language. But the expression of being is encompassing inasmuch as communicative expression will be only an enclave in existence, and inasmuch as the whole existence of communicative expression comes once again to express a being, which it will unconsciously symbolize. [4]

In Jaspers' thought communication becomes a "loving struggle" between free beings to manifest the depths of self-being, to realize eternity in time. However, even the deepest communication possible will not exhaust the mystery of being.

In contrast to the cipher, the meaning of a symbolic expression will be solidified in thought according to rules and principles of exegesis which we establish. The symbol comes to be interpreted within a coherent framework which allows the sublimation of inherent contradictions. The possibility of counterinterpretations is ignored despite the fact that placing the symbol in a framework does not permit the proof or disproof of our own interpretation. We begin to restrain arbitrarily our interpretations through this or that "self-made circle of formulas that will somehow fit everywhere."[5] Instead of this misguided interpreting, we are to remember that symbolism is not knowledge even in those instances where a set of symbols is made into a sign

language by convention.

Science proceeds by elaborating relational contexts and regularities. Its object is understood only inasmuch as these relations are determinable. The cipher, on the other hand, is absolute in that it is not understood as in relation to anything else, but is seen as in unity with essential reality.

> Symbolic being as a cipher of transcendence. . . is not in any relation; it is only directly for one who can see it. It cuts across reality, so to speak, in a dimension of depth; a man may immerse himself in that dimension, but he cannot step out of it without promptly losing it all. 6

The cipher is not apprehended in objective interpretations of any kind, but is heard, and in the hearing, created by us. Our hearing of the cipher is our decision about being itself. It is only in our self-transformation, in our deepening self-presence in time, that we hear the "code messages of all things".

The significance of the cipher script is unfolded philosophically in the third language of metaphysical speculation by means of circular exegesis.

> From the cognitive point of view a logical circle is empty, and arguments in it become nonsensical; but in another dimension when the substance of an Existenz fulfills it, the circle is the present view of transcendence as imparted in the speculative language. It is the viewpoint from which all interpretations that seek to fathom the whole are indeed modes of creating and reading a cipher script. 7

Here Jaspers is affirming that the cipher is subject to existential rather than logical criteria. The cipher is communicated most truthfully in the communication of Existenz with Existenz. We are not convinced by intellectual apprehension, nor does empirical observation impart certainty;

rather, the certainty of the cipher lies in the fact that it shows forth what we are in the depths of ourselves.

Unless the roots of the cipher in the origin of Existenz are kept intact, the cipher remains just as ambiguous as all cognitive symbolism. The genuine cipher, because it is rooted in the historicity of Existenz, is peculiar for each self. Cipher reading is not to culminate in a cognitive ultimate, but in our not-knowing. We deepen our self-understanding by means of the elucidation of one cipher by another. We remain in the movement of interpretation. Ambiguity is overcome when Existenz is historically present in the unequivocal adoption of the cipher as its own substance. This is because the Transcendence which fulfills a particular Existenz is historically unique.

Cognitive interpretation of ciphers is endlessly random, and will fail to reproduce consciously what is original only in the immediacy of self-discovery, when Existenz awakens. Through our interpretive exegesis of the cipher (always a matter of communication for Jaspers), we aim at re-ciphering it, rather than at its cognition. From an external point of view the cipher will always remain ambiguous, but in the moment of self-becoming, when Existenz is conscious of its historicity, the cipher loses its random ambiguity. What ambiguousness remains will be due to the variety of ways in which the cipher can be existentially adopted.

> Not until an Existenz is historically present will the possibility of adoption become unequivocal for that Existenz, in a way that is nontransferable and

> unknowable for the Existenz itself. The unequivocality lies in that fact that nothing substitutes for the transcendence that fulfills this Existenz. 8

It is by enhancing "the presentness of their content" that ciphers, original only in our immediacy, are renewed. Through the historic choice of one's self-presence in time the cipher becomes unequivocal. Ambiguity is overcome through the existential decision which is at the same time the conferment of meaning.

Symbolism, then, that is approached as if it were a matter of determining the correct interpretation, will be a decline into viewing the cipher objectively. But these interpretations will arise out of the methodic application of "principles", "systematic associations", "genetic explanations", and so on. Our hermeneutic formulas only mask the fact that our interpretations are "groundless" unless they grow out of the depths of the self. The interpretation of ciphers will remain in the flow of an historic self-consciousness; our interpretation remains a movement through metaphors which are "grounded" in the decisions building up who we are.

In random exegesis we begin with a definite symbol which can be interpreted so that another finite symbol can be substituted in the place of the original one. When we do this, however, we are not recognizing the "uninterpretable presence" of the cipher. In such an instance we lose the infinite through fixation in the finite. Our play in symbols is replaced with "knowledge".

When it is the case of reading the cipher script, in

contrast, we remain alert to the presence of Transcendence. In our interpretations (which are the fabric of our communication) we begin with the infinite: "it is the infinite presence of transcendence that turns finite things into ciphers."[9] The infinite presence of Transcendence is not conveyed in any one fashion to all Existenzen and will not lose its ambiguity until the cipher is existentially adopted. It is only in the encounter with Transcendence that the cipher attains completeness for us unequivocally. But any object can serve as the medium of this encounter.

The Universality of the Cipher

Any objectivity of which the intellect is aware is able to become a cipher, but Jaspers gives four rules to which the cipher will conform.[10] They are: 1) It is not an anticipation of knowledge such that we can get at it by cracking a code. Knowledge "serves only to sharpen the edge of the cipher."[11] 2) The cipher is not expressive of a psychological reality; it is not an archetypal configuration having its source in the individual's psyche (ego). 3) It is neither a spiritual artifact nor a natural form. Lastly, 4) the cipher is not a description of the life of the soul, i.e., it is not emotive. The objectivity which becomes a cipher is absolute for self-consciousness in that it cannot be replaced by another objectivity.

The cipher brings us into touch with that reality which is wholly unintelligible.

> To make the cipher script intelligible means to void it. To see the unintelligible as such, in exact form, by understanding the intelligible--this is what per-

> mits transcendence to be touched through the cipher when that unintelligibility becomes transparent. 12

As Jaspers develops it, the task of reading ciphers is to bring the finite empirical world to transparency in moments of authentic self-presence. The object is irradiated with meaning from within, from the depths of an Existenz. In the transformation of the objectivity its intelligibility gives way to its uninterpretable presence.

We saw in the last chapter that, when we bring our experience of this depth-immediacy into communicative expression, we do not thereby translate this experience into hard and fast reality of which we can have knowledge. The cipher, by being translated into a permanent or quasi-permanent form for consciousness-as-such, would thereby lose its true reality as a historically unique configuration which summons us to ourselves. Transcendence speaks to each one of us to the degree that we turn and listen; through the cipher I hear what is being spoken about myself--if I would but make a decision. "The being of ciphers lies in the historic fulfillment of their unsurveyable depth; as general forms of existence they are reduced to mere shells."[13]

The cipher-world, therefore, cannot be arranged with any fixity, but we can assay it to get a "feel" for it, as if it were arranged in a natural sequence. We take our start with the investigations of the natural and historical sciences when we hear Transcendence as it spoke and as it speaks to men. Even the categories of the intellect, as we have seen, become ciphers. And in turn, the histori-

cally singular person can come to be gleaned as a cipher. Man himself becomes a cipher.

We can identify nature as what is other than ourselves, as the world in which we find our being, and as well, the dark, impenetrable ground of our empirical being. However, to read nature as a cipher we must apprehend it as an idea. The same applies to history, although, when reading the cipher of history, "the cipher is legible only in the historicity between an imaginary beginning and end."[14] History, as a cipher, is "the existence of my own essence"[15]. It becomes unveiled as the free acts of men which reveal to us the truth of Existenz; we hear in these acts appeals to us in our choice of action here and now.

As a cipher, "consciousness-as-such" points to the "fact that existence is such as to involve order, and this kind of order"[16]. Order, rule, legality can all become ciphers when viewed in their singularity. Finally, when man sees himself as a cipher, by bringing all aspects of himself into a "whole", he comes closest to Transcendence.

Each man is a cipher in his unity with nature, in his unity with the history of a spiritual community, and in the passionate unconditionality of his own choices for freedom.

> To himself, man is nature as well as consciousness, history as well as Existenz. Being human is the node of all existence, the spot where all things tie in for us, the standpoint from which everything else becomes conceivable for us. To call it a microcosm says too little; man's transcendent relation goes beyond any cosmos. He may be conceived as the central link of being in which the remotest things meet. The world and transcendence entwine in man, in the Existenz that occupies the borderline between them. What man is cannot be ontologically stated.

> Never sufficient unto himself, not grasped in any knowledge, man is to himself a cipher. [17]

It is freedom which lies between the world and transcendence; and this is where Existenz dwells in the cipher.[18]

The Historicity of the Cipher

The experience of freedom, then, is the experience of Transcendence. To apprehend the ultimate reality apart from ourselves (as if we could observe God) is impossible. Transcendence speaks to us through the cipher by bringing us to a heightened consciousness of our historicity.[19] It is only through my own historicity that I have the possibility of encountering Transcendence. But Transcendence itself is not historic. "The paradox of transcendence lies in the fact that we can grasp it only historically but cannot adequately conceive it as being historic itself."[20] However, it is necessarily the case that Transcendence must change along with Existenz if it is to be heard at all. It is only the appearance of Transcendence which changes.

The modes of objectivity have the characteristic of "disappearance" in common when they become ciphers. This is due to the historicity of Existenz. The cipher, Jaspers tells us, is a form of disappearance and not a form of continuity since the truth of Transcendence cannot be absolutized in time. If the metaphysical objectivity were to be deemed permanent, it would become a false attempt to petrify truth in statements preceded by "This is the way it is. . .". We ourselves are historic beings in that we participate in the present communities in which we find ourselves; in this time now we aim at the authentication that is ours in freedom.

The cipher is the appearance of Transcendence, hence, changes along with Existenz in "the unrest of historically self-created motion"[21].

> In transcendence as a reality in historic form, the sense of being is always self-sufficient, not to be repeated and not to be copied. If the appearance of Existenz is historic rather than general, and if it is only becoming, not yet being--not like the passive becoming of existence, however, but by freely realizing itself in the extant medium--the transcendence that appears to it must also become historic. It is a certainty, not a knowledge, that is derived from the historic phenomenon. 22

Jaspers would have us understand that in this movement it is only the formal aspect of the objectivity which disappears; the substantial content is renewed in this disappearance. This "substantial" content is Existenz.

We come to ourselves consciously when we begin to communicate with others against the backdrop of our traditions. The more we struggle with the experience of Transcendence which we hear echoed in the works of men and women of the past, the more we are able to discern the freedom which truly lies open to us. Within the mysterious depths of the past, voices rise to the surface calling upon us to continue their tasks. "Whatever Existenz experiences as its transcendence will be brought to present lucidity by what it hears from its past. No more than I invent and make my own language do I invent and make the metaphysical symbolism, the language in which transcendence is experienced."[23]

What we receive in terms of our historical substance, at first unconsciously, begins to be questioned; we hear mutually conflicting claims, the moreso that we have ex-

panded our own past into a universal one. Through education we deliberately cultivate a receptivity for the truths of men from all parts of the world--by giving them a hearing, by responding to what they are communicating, by sharing who it is we are.

Along with Jaspers, we can discern two ways of approaching the past: cognitively and adoptively. The first way proceeds by way of empirical research into extant objectivities which show "what was once a phenomenon of being proper for free Existenz."[24] In the latter, we respond to Transcendence as previous men have experienced it by appropriating the substance of their experience in the present. Through the reinvigoration of objective content communicated from the past, what they experienced appears even now as an "accompanying possibility" for us--provided that we are integrally involved in our research. If so, we will come to understand truth as "the one-time revelation of an Existenz."[25]

Existenz, then, is the source of metaphysical objectivity. And ciphers express "a truth of which new forms of truth are transformations or transpositions."[26] The historically determined objectivities will reflect wholly singular relationships to Transcendence when taken up by each newly present Existenz in its active listening. We want to realize, to be sure, that the cipher is not simply a metaphysical "idea".

> What has been stated only in objective terms is meaningless as a metaphysical idea. It takes an approach to its roots and an adoptive transposi-

> tion to reveal its truth to each historic Existenz. No mere intellect will succeed in this "looking through", nor is it capable of direct communication. 27

The cipher is the becoming of Existenz in the tension of time. Hence, we can say that the cipher is the decision that is oneself.

The ultimacy of Wirklichkeit, essential reality, can only be encountered by the self in the depths of its own historicity. We are thereby awakened to our origin in being; "that origin is the undefinable ground--and then the non-spatial region--to which philosophizing returns for each crucial verification. It is from there that the ascertainment of being leads us to the modes of transcending, and it is back there that we are led by fulfilled transcending as the current reality in the situation of our existence."[28] According to Jaspers, we are able to transcend because we will find not only empirical reality, but also freedom and Transcendence, in everything that is.

Although in thought we distinguish between our historic reality and our knowledge of this reality, in actual fact the two are existentially inseparable. When I have knowledge of the past, that is, when I am conscious of being as historic, I am at the same time realizing it in my own historicity. But the realization of historicity is unique each time it is sparked.

> If it were not unique. . . . It would be an object instead of penetrating objectivities as its phenomena. . . .it takes a leap to spark a sense of historicity--not a leap in thought but one in consciousness itself, a translation of the thought into a reality of consciousness. 29

The "miracle" of our historicity is that in time we experience the spark of eternity.

The sole universal, the reality of Transcendence, is, ever-paradoxically, the unity of the subjective and the objective, the universal and the particular, the general and the historic. We experience its reality, its astonishing oneness, in three ways:

> The universal was thus, first, the objective form under which the particular is subsumed as a case. Secondly, it was the objectivity fulfilled by the present Existenz that grasps transcendence in it. And thirdly, it was the ineffable and unimaginable singularity that is encountered as the only reality.[30]

Every particular objectivity is suspended and transformed in its mode of objectivity through the dialectical movement of Reason; I experience Transcendence in a cipher when I unite my Existenz with the objectivity; and finally, I founder against the darkness which is impenetrable.

In our philosophizing, through the "play" of speculation, we seek to remain true to the decisions of our past (against the backdrop of the decisions which have become our history) by furthering them daily in our self-continuity. It is through communication with each other here and now that we discover our present eternity. "Philosophizing," writes Jaspers, "is the activity of thought itself, by which the essence of man, in its entirety, is realized in the individual man. This activity originates from life in the depths where it touches Eternity inside Time, not at the surface where it moves in finite purposes, even though the depths appear to us only at the surface."[31] In our historicity, everything can be seen as connected with Transcendence.

CHAPTER IV

Foundering

It is Jaspers' view that to acknowledge the unceasing transformation of everything, to realize that all of our objectifications are transient, is the adoption of an undeceivingly realistic orientation in the world. This is a realism which faces the ultimacy of "foundering"[1] (Scheitern). At every turn we come up against the darkness in which all things are enveloped; this is to founder. In this cipher Jaspers' metaphysical thinking casts us back upon ourselves.

Foundering, Jaspers tells us, occurs even in logic when we have realized that what is cogently rational is relative as an adopted validity. The categories of the intellect are, so to speak, communicative agreements long since compacted. Logical statements concern possible relationships and presuppose a prior "whole" as a ground.[2] Cognitively, we are guided by the necessary conceptions of the intellect, but we cannot overcome the antinomies against which it comes to grief. Through Reason we seek unity, but find ourselves gliding in the unfinished idea as we struggle to remain in communication.

We learn that we cannot explain the world in terms of itself, nor can we understand ourselves solely in reference to the world or to each other. The authentic search for self that is a possible Existenz is at the same time the search for Transcendence. However, in this search our ordered thought will be scuttled by the violent passions which grip us from within. Foundering becomes a cipher with which

all the other ciphers will resonate.

> . . .it is what ultimately comes to mind in thinking of all things. In logic, validity founders on relativity; at the bounds of knowledge we confront antinomies that finish our ability to think without contradictions; what emerges beyond knowledge, encompassing knowledge, is a truth that is not rationalistic. For world orientation the world founders as existence, being not comprehensible by and in itself; it does not become a closed intelligible being, nor can the cognitive process round itself into a whole. What founders in existential elucidation is the being-in-itself of Existenz; where I am really myself I am not myself only. In transcendence, thought will founder on nocturnal passion.[3]

The idea of foundering is developed as the "last cipher"; our cognition of the world, our existential being in communication, and our thoughts about God all evaporate into deep silence.

But, Jaspers adds, if we are to founder meaningfully, we must not only know that we cannot endure in time, that phenomenal death is inevitable, we must <u>respond</u> to this knowledge. The fact of our eventual "non-beingness" should permeate every layer of our consciousness--our empirical existence does not last. But, if we have disassociated ourselves from the concreteness of the world, then we are able to actualize freedom in the world. "Man alone can founder, and this capacity is to him not unequivocal: it challenges him to react to it."

In each sphere of the Encompassing foundering will occur. In existence we founder on the hard, cold realities of pain, disease, death; and, as "consciousness-as-such", upon the antinomies of rational thought. Existenz founders, for its part, when it is most assured of its self-being. At that point Existenz will realize that it cannot become entire

in time: the need for decision is not repealed, nor the quest for freedom ended. Through the experience of its freedom Existenz discovers that it is given to itself in its becoming. In the "absolute consciousness" of a free being, Transcendence is encountered.

Thus, Jaspers holds that the fact of our foundering in existence is not to be met with stoic indifference; rather, each mode of foundering will lead us to ask if there is a being which reveals itself to us in this universal destruction--whether that which founders is perishing in fact--or whether it reveals a being. In other words, whether foundering can mean not merely foundering but eternalization."

By "eternalization" Jaspers seems to mean a process of self-choosing whereby meaning (or better yet, self-presence) emerges even in the face of death. This is to say that our transiency through time is, in some mysterious manner, the actualization of our true self-being. As a biological being, the person wills "duration in time", self-preservation; but, no matter how prolonged this duration may come to be (through posthumous fame or through progeny), the person's "duration" eventually comes to an end. Nevertheless, when the passing of all existent beings is admitted, we can leap to the realization that our "true being" rests in the reality of the here and now, in our present disappearing. If Existenz freely accepts itself in resolute decision, even perishing can reveal being. "Foundering, which in my existence I merely suffer as though

by accident, can now be embraced as intrinsic foundering. Instead of spurning it, my will to make things eternal seems to find its goal in foundering itself."

Since we cannot persist in time, Jaspers is asking us to understand time as the paradoxical locus of eternity. If it is only in time that we become aware of our relation to Transcendence, then it is only in time that we can become aware of eternity. In the actualization of Existenz, the "surface" of time opens to the "depths" of eternity.

In time Existenz seeks the unconditionality of free decision, and hence, will remain discontent with its conditioned reality in the world. Consequently, in time Existenz will be manifest as a "self-searching"; it must risk decision, however, in order to receive itself in freedom. Thereby Existenz encounters its own ground in Transcendence. Foundering is legitimately understood, Jaspers says, when it prompts the readiness to risk unconditional activity on the part of Existenz, even in the face of probable (and eventual) failure.

This, however, is not a determined willing to founder. "The cipher of eternalization in foundering is lucid only when I do not want to founder even though I take the risk. . . .The cipher unveils, not when I will it, but when I do all I can to avoid its reality." Eternalization, we can say, is the inner activity of Existenz in the risk of freedom. It is not a natural development which "blooms" at the moment of death, but a preparation for participation in the free community of the spirit. We may will eternalization; we do not will to founder.

For Jaspers, the goal of our cipher reading is the experience of love in the fulfilled consciousness of self-being. Love is the source of the will to communicate. Where in time, love is expressed, there is eternity. This can occur only when Existenz apprehends the disjointedness of being, when it awakens to the depths of being which sustain the surface appearance. In communication with free beings, we can discover our own origin in historic being. In our mutual reciprocity, in our choosing for ourselves (and these choices affect others), we seek to realize the communication which, in essence, is freedom.

Jaspers discloses the heart of his philosophizing in the following passage:

> No truth will let me reach the goal for myself alone. I share in being what others are; I am responsible for that which is outside me, because I can address it and enter into active relations with it; I am a possible Existenz for other Existenz. I therefore reach the goal of my existence only if I grasp what is around me. I have not come to myself until the world with which I can establish possible communication has come to itself with me. Freedom depends upon the freedom of others. The measure of my self-being is my neighbor's self-being, and finally that of all men. 4

When we are philosophizing, thinking for ourselves as Jaspers would have us, we strive to protect the freedom of the other, and in so doing, protect our own. There is no free man if all men are not free.

But even the idea of our being only in community founders. Jaspers thinks that intrinsic being will be revealed to Existenz only with the realization that this insight into its interdependence with other Existenz also founders.

Until our logical thought processes reveal their inherent antinomies, we are apt to place too much trust in the intellect. But the intrinsic truth of Transcendence will remain inaudible as it cannot be expressed in timeless validities. In time the truth of essential reality is historic; it comes to be when Existenz remains with Reason in its movement through the modes of the Encompassing. In each "mode of being" Reason will spin around the point where all objectivity vanishes and Existenz awakens. But in time this is a movement of disappearing phenomenality. "The impossibility of lingering causes the whole of a fulfilled existential reality to spin around this vanishing point."

Empirical existence will not give way to the expression of free being. It is only in the instant of its achievement that free being is according to Jaspers. In the foundering of all objectivity Existenz can awaken to itself and its reality in the cipher.

> The fact that endless duration and timeless validity founder is the chance of freedom, which exists in the motion of passing away as existence when it really is. Transcendent being too is present in existence as its transparency, but in such a way that the transparent existence disappears as existence. What really is will enter the world in a leap and disappear from the world as it is realized. 5

We can point to nothing that is objective as a proof of freedom. Freedom, on the contrary, yields an achieved movement of self-identification; this is the inwardness of self-continuity, and is revealed through the decisions made in time. Freedom is actualized when unconditional action in the world springs from an inner self-presence which is one with the

world, but also "deeper" than the world. As the leap to an existential self-presence, freedom will escape cognition.

The resistance of nature, however, is necessary for the possibility of freedom. "Without meeting resistance, and without being grounded in itself, freedom would not be." For Jaspers, the entanglement of nature and freedom is itself a cipher of being: in and through freedom, when Existenz awakens to itself in existence, Transcendence is discovered as the encompassing ground of its origin. But this entanglement means that freedom is also antinomic. We cannot become one with nature without foregoing freedom, and yet we cannot resist nature without inevitably losing the battle.

In the necessity of our foundering Jaspers believes that the "fallacy about being", that being is empirical existence, is revealed. If we were simply existent, we would not be aware of our foundering in the presence of Transcendence. We would not aspire to attain more comprehensive fulfillment; we would not be seeking eternity in time.

> Being, barred from perception in finite existence, has in a sense arranged it so that in seeking it we feel obliged to produce it as existence, whereas it is eternity. For what shows being to us, by way of realization in existence, is the exploding of the fallacy that it is existence--in other words, the real occurrence of fulfilled foundering. 6

We experience a deepening in time when we touch Transcendence; this unobjectifiable experience is an "instant" transformation of consciousness in the "inner space" where the world disappears and Transcendence is present.

All ciphers have their encompassing ground in our foundering. The view of my existential ruin, of my finiteness

in time, casts its sheen over every particular cipher-reading in the present. That we founder, that I founder, gives the ultimate uninterpretability of the ciphers potency whereby a true consciousness of being may arise and become the source of all existential realization in time.

> Finally, the uninterpretable cipher is the only one in which the world's end becomes being. Any end we know is in the world and in time; it is never an end of the world and of time. But the silence before the uninterpretable cipher of universal foundering relates to transcendent being, before which the world has passed away. What is revealed in foundering--the non-being of all being accessible to us--is the being of transcendence. 7

The cipher of being in Transcendence, of universal foundering, can only be greeted with silence. It is the "last cipher". To realize that all being in the world is essentially non-being, is the doorway to the uninterpretability of the final silence (which we can affirm only in "silent fidelity"). In the experience of this uninterpretable reality, it is possible that an active not-knowing can transform our consciousness of being.

But, does this not leave death and oblivion as the inescapably real eventualities? Must we not resign ourselves to a final despairing? Jaspers does not think so. He thinks that from fear we can leap to an inner peace, the most tremendous leap a man can take. The peace to which we aspire, according to Jaspers, is an experience which grows out of the not-knowing which is an actively endured suffering. "In sufferance lies the not-knowing of the kind that makes men active in the world without any need to believe in the possibility of a good and definitive world order."

Clearly, Jaspers is not asking us to view life through

rose-colored glasses. He does not ask us to overlook the universal destruction of everything in time, or to accept some ultimately harmonious world-view based upon a particular truth. Rather, I hear him saying that despite the world's horrors, we can love here and now. It is, to be sure, love which comes to "bloom" in the cipher, in those fulfilled moments of communication, when Existenz is assured of its self-being because it is assured of Transcendence. This love both deepens and spreads in time.

We are in a movement towards our true self-being. In a very real sense, we are this movement; for this reason, the end and the beginning of this movement are inaccessible to us. Our truth is in our communication, and remains unfinished in time.

By Way of Summary

Rational knowledge allows us "mastery over things"; we move about more freely in the interaction with our environment when we know what we are aiming to accomplish. But, further, in the infinite reflection that is Reason, we become transparent to ourselves in self-revelation. By the transforming of objective being into a cipher, philosophizing scans the road ahead for vestiges of Transcendence. It "creates free space for the movement toward Being itself."[8] It arises in the movement of Existenz and Reason towards the "infinitely possible". Unless this movement is "bound" to our actual situations, it will become unreal.

We endow the empirically real with meaning through our philosophizing. We do this by seeing ourselves as one with

the situations in which we find ourselves; and yet, we do not fix ourselves to any actuality, but remain open to possibility. We unfold in our changing situations. It is our present "here and now" that serves as the locus, the vanishing point, of our philosophizing. If I am truly philosophizing, Jaspers tells me, my present historicity will come to be for me "in such a way that eternity is in the now and Being is in the disappearing."[9]

When we bring the empirically real to transparency, we are at the same time effecting a disassociation from the empirically real in the decision for Wirklichkeit. Everything that is will come to speak of this essential reality. Jaspers writes:

> Soil, landscape, and love, the institutions of communality, friends, the beloved, are for me not only the sensuous reality of perceptibility but the historical presence of Being itself. [10]

From within, we experience the depth of Being behind every definite being which arises in present consciousness. This is not an experience of another reality, but is the experience of the world as imbued with the fullness of Being. I am completely involved, but Transcendence is as well--moreso. This experience is faith.

Men without faith, Jaspers would say, have lost the ground-experience. It is their "groundlessness" which results in futile skepticism, or empty abstractions, or arbitrary capriciousness. They have lost sight of the presence of Transcendence in every object. "Consequently, man can find himself without foundation if the original, infinitely certain, non-sensuous content of Being, the essentially real

within the empirical, is lost to him."[11] Essential reality disappears without revealing itself where there is no faith. "Philosophical presentness" arises only when objective being is not taken to be absolute Being. It arises where there is a decision for Being as "more than" what we are.

In philosophizing we are seeking to transcend thought as well as empirical reality. Jaspers thinks that there are philosophical thoughts which, with the "minimum of representation" necessary for any thought (signs, images, language), result in the thinker becoming present to himself; these are extremely abstract thoughts but they are not empty ones. They carry the experience of Being united with Existenz. For this to occur, the content of the thought must disappear. "Thought itself becomes a cipher. No longer in the sensuous, but in thought, Being becomes present." This is a leap in consciousness. Philosophical speculation is confirmed "in the pure spiritualization (ideation) of Being" which it makes possible. The thinker transcends to the "space" where all thoughts become transparent in that they lie open in freedom.

Metaphysical speculation is different than scientific thinking about objects; it is "play". But it is serious play. It is also play with zest. When a thought-movement caves in, when it becomes logically vertiginous, it is then that we can become aware of the source of our being.

> In thinking, something which is not this thought itself awakens, and something becomes apparent from the certainty of the existence of consciousness up to the source of Existenz in Transcendence. 12

It is this "something else" that gives to our philosophizing its gravity. Jaspers writes : ". . .it is the point at which I think without thinking about it, where I am myself present in thought." This awareness of the source, the ground-experience, arises when thought and life become one, when the "whole" man is awake to his roots in Transcendence.

When we become aware of this "something else", we seek to bring into consciousness "this that is unconscious". But, can we ever fully succeed? This "something else" is "that which carries thought." It is that within us which sifts through all thought, and through the sifting, lets it all fall to seed. Through speculation which is able to render thought transparent, we are able to disassociate ourselves from the concretely real in order to ascend to "this region of a spiritual self-affirmation." For hidden in the thought-movement is "what I cannot grasp in thought but which is given to us with thought through its movement." Through Reason we experience the most sublime consciousness of faith. The man awakens to maturity. We conclude that for Jaspers it is Existenz which is "the foremost bearer of all expressible meaning."[13]

It is the experience of our own "rise and fall" in self-presence wherein we hear the cipher (or fail to hear it). This is because no permanent objectification of Transcendence is possible in the flow of temporal consciousness. If there were no ciphers, there would be no awareness of an encounter with Transcendence since this meeting requires communication, which requires thought, which, in turn, requires objectivity.

It is only in communication that the cipher arises. However, we are not thereby transmitting "knowledge"; we are expressing, rather, our re-association with the world. It is the cipher which prompts the awareness of possible freedom, and which enables self-actualization, without betraying the incomprehensibility of Being. The cipher calls forth who we are in fidelity.

In the hearing of the cipher our self-transformation is provoked. "Thought works upon the reality of man. What thinking achieves in throwing light on impulses and in visions of possibilities, that is what transforms the thinking man."[14] For the individual, who cannot help but feel a profound dissatisfaction with who he is in his temporal existence, the cipher is the language of freedom, in essence, the language of love. The cipher does not beckon the individual out of the world, but permits hidden Transcendence to speak in and through existence. It is able to do this because the cipher is himself, the world, and Transcendence in one.

It should be pointed out that Jaspers has been dubbed an "irrationalist". Again, we cannot agree with this criticism. To argue that Reason founders in the end against the non-rational is not to depreciate Reason; it is to argue for the ultimacy of love. Whether one agrees with Jaspers or not, if one calls him an "irrationalist" pejoratively, this is to show that one has not really understood Jaspers' conception of Reason as the "praxis" of communication having its source in love.

Concluding Remarks

Let us now retrieve the three questions with which we began in order to close this inquiry. First, we should note that our questioning comes to an end, according to Jaspers, in the experience of the cipher. Questions fall away in the "instant" of fulfilled self-presence when the cipher becomes audible. Since our experience of this fullness is but momentary, the questions will rise again. However, they will have been refurbished with significance (if not urgency) through the self-transformation which hearing the cipher involves.

What is Metaphysics?

Metaphysics is the search for God and springs from a philosophical faith. It is not a form of "knowing", but rather, of not-knowing. The symbol is the medium of metaphysics. We are able to express the experience of our own immediacy indirectly in metaphysical thought-movements.

The substance of metaphysics is not ontology. It is not possible for us to have knowledge about the one reality within which we dwell. This is because everything that becomes an object for us is as our consciousness frames it. Being itself is more than consciousness. Being includes us; we do not encompass Being.

Thus, whenever we speak about Being, or God, or Transcendence, we must avoid claiming that we "know" what we are talking about. Our talk is metaphorical; it is an enciphering of our self-being. It is all the more true

for that reason, but it will not be true for all.

Whatever we can objectify, that we can know. But, in metaphysics the objectivity undergoes transformation; it is "taken up" by us as who we are. In our metaphysical speculation we are communicating ourselves and our experience of Transcendence, not in "a priori" propositions, but in thought-movements which must be rekindled by each thinker if they are to be heard.

Absolute truth is Transcendence, hence, is inaccessible in time; truth which we consider "timeless" is an objectification of the intellect. Truth, as it is apprehended in faith, is expressed historically. It is the truth as it has come to be in men and women. It is carried by the "idea" from generation to generation, however, it is heard only when one lives it. Our historicity now has its source in the decisions made in the past. Our decisions in the present will continue to reverberate in the future.

What is Philosophy?

For Jaspers, the real question is, "What is philosophizing?". Asking this serves to emphasis that it is an activity, a praxis, and not just a collection of historic texts. Philosophizing is the inner activity whereby we seek to come to ourselves in freedom. When we philosophize, we are seeking to illuminate the possibilities open to us in our present situations. We are looking to actualize freedom on the basis of what we know and what we can imagine.

Science and philosophy are different pursuits. Both are necessary. In our sciences we are able to arrive at

justified true beliefs because the object of science is universally communicable. In philosophizing the thinker aims at overcoming the objectifications of the intellect in order to attain to the "space" of freedom. In his immediacy he can experience the unity of the world and his self-being. In moments of existential communication love (i.e., eternity) will imbue his present from the depths of the spirit. In such moments we awaken to the presence of Transcendence; this experience is prepared for in our philosophizing.

What is Man?

The "whole" man is beyond our definitions of who he is. The human being is radically open to inner transformation. There is no permanent human nature. In time we are yet becoming; decisions must still be made. This question must be asked again and again to prevent us from the complacency of thinking that we know what "man" is.

When we ask this question, we are brought to the question about God as well. This does not mean that we ask, "Does God exist?". Rather, it is to ask: "Who or what is your God?" Again, this is not a question we can solve. It will arise as long as men struggle for their freedom. But it must be asked. In philosophizing we clear the space for this question. It is this question which dignifies metaphysical speculation.

FOOTNOTES

Introduction (pp. 1-20)

1 Takatura Ando, Metaphysics, A Critical Survey of Its Meaning, 2nd ed., rev. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), p. 3.

2 Hannah Arendt, The Life of the Mind: Thinking, Vol. 2, ed. Mary McCarthy (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), p. 22.

3 Emil Fackenheim, Metaphysics and Historicity, The Aquinas Lecture, 1961 (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1961), p. 9.

4 Ibid, p. 10.

5 Cf. Martin Buber, Between Man and Man, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith, Fount Paperbacks (Glasgow: William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd., 1979), pp. 148-247.

6 Cf. Karl Jaspers, Philosophy, 3 vol., trans. E. B. Ashton (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago, 1969-71), II, p. 177ff. This work will be noted by volume number henceforth. For the reader's information Volume I concerns world orientation; Volume II deals with existential self-elucidation; and Volume III discusses metaphysics.

Boundary situations are situations which are beyond our power to control. We cannot change them. Examples are death, guilt, suffering, and struggle.

7 J. M. Spier, Christianity and Existentialism, trans. David Hugh Freeman (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1953), p. 18.

8 Cf. A. Lichtigfeld, "Jaspers' Philosophical Basis (Kant or Hegel)", Kantstudien, Vol. 53 (1961/62), p. 34. He quotes Jaspers as follows: "Who really philosophizes, does philosophize with Aristotle, Thomas, Hegel, or, alternatively, with Plato, Kant, Kierkegaard."

9 Karl Jaspers, Truth and Symbol from Von der Wahrheit, trans. by Jean T. Wilde, William Kluback and William Kimmel (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1959), p. 19. From here on in this concluding chapter of Jaspers' first volume of philosophical logic will be abbreviated T & S.

10 Leonard Ehrlich, Karl Jaspers: Philosophy as Faith (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts, 1975), p. 162.

Chapter I (pp. 21-35)

1 Karl Jaspers, "Philosophical Autobiography", The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers, ed. Paul Arthur Schilpp, The Library of Living Philosophers (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1957), pp. 28-29.

2 I, pp. 286-7.

3 Karl Jaspers, "Reply to My Critics", The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers, op. cit., p. 829.

4 Karl Jaspers, "Philosophical Autobiography", op. cit., p. 40.

5 Karl Jaspers, General Psychopathology, trans. J. Hoeig and Marian W. Hamilton (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 332.

6 Ibid.

7 It should be noted that "eternity by way of the moment" is the idea which Jaspers develops as "historicity".

8 Karl Jaspers, Reason and Existenz, trans. William Earle, The Noonday Press (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1955), p. 49. (To be referred to as R & Ex.)

9 Ibid.

10 Cf. Troy E. Majors, "The Existence-Thought Disjunction", Southern Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Spring, 1970), p. 15.

11 Søren Kierkegaard, Fear and Trembling and The Sickness Unto Death, trans. Walter Lowrie (New Jersey: Princeton University Press), pp. 146-7.

12 Jean Wahl, "Notes on Some Relations of Jaspers to Kierkegaard and Heidegger", The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers, op. cit., p. 396.

13 Søren Kierkegaard, The Sickness Unto Death, op. cit., p. 211.

14 Søren Kierkegaard, The Point of View For My Work As An Author, A Report to History, ed. Benjamin Nelson, Harper Torchbooks (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1962), p. 9.

15 R & Ex., p. 32.

16 Karl Jaspers, General Psychopathology, op. cit., p. 331.

17 Karl Jaspers, "Reply to My Critics", op. cit., p. 780.

18 III, p. 6.

19 Karl Jaspers, "Reply to My Critics", op. cit., p. 825.

20 I, p. 70.

21 Gerhard Knauss, "The Concept of the 'Encompassing' in Karl Jaspers' Philosophy", The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers, op. cit., p. 154.

22 Leonard Ehrlich, Karl Jaspers: Philosophy as Faith", op. cit., p. 128.

23 Cf. Gerhard Knauss, op. cit., p. 143.

24 Karl Jaspers, Reason and Anti-Reason in our Time, trans. Stanley Godman (London: SCM Press, 1952) p. 37.

25 R & Ex., p. 67.

26 Karl Jaspers, "Reply to My Critics", op. cit., p. 792.

27 Karl Jaspers, Anaximander, Heraclitus, Parmenides, Plotinus, Lao-Tzu, Nagarjuna from The Great Philosophers, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Ralph Manheim, Harvest Books (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1966), p. 20.

28 Karl Jaspers, "Reply to My Critics", op. cit., p. 790.

29 R & Ex., p. 147.

30 Cf. Karl Jaspers, Philosophy of Existence, trans. Richard F. Grabau (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), pp. 17-29.

31 Karl Jaspers, "Reply to My Critics", op. cit., p. 792.

32 Karl Jaspers, Philosophy of Existence, op. cit., p. 19.

33 Karl Jaspers, "Reply", p. 791.

34 T & S, p. 69.

35 Ibid, p. 19.

Chapter II (pp. 36-54)

1 Cf. II, p. 303.

2 I, p. 316.

3 Ibid, p. 317.

4 I, pp. 160-1.

5 Karl Jaspers, "Reply", op. cit., p. 832.

6 Ibid, p. 798.

7 I, p. 243.

8 Cf. I, p. 226ff.

9 T & S, p. 22

10 II, p. 306.

11 I, p. 52.

12 II, p. 303.

13 II, p. 306.

14 II, p. 300.

15 T & S, p. 66.

16 III, p. 35.

17 III, p. 113.

18 Cf. T & S, pp. 37-43 for the following discussion. All uncited quotations in this section will be found here. Cf. Karl Jaspers, Von der Wahrheit (Munich: R. Piper & Co. Verlag, 1947), pp. 1030-33.

19 T & S, p. 38.

20 III, p. 15.

21 T & S, p. 40

22 Karl Jaspers, Von der Wahrheit, p. 1033.

23 Cf. III, pp. 113-122.

24 T & S, p. 61

25 Ibid.

26 II, p. 241.

27 III, p. 114.

28 T & S, p. 58

29 Cf. III, p. 116.

30 III, p. 117.

31 III, p. 120.

32 Ibid.

33 III, p. 121.

Chapter III (pp. 55-69)

1 Cf. III, p. 124ff.

2 III, p. 126.

3 III, p. 125.

4 III, p. 126.

5 III, p. 128.

6 Ibid.

7 III, p. 128.

8 III, p. 130.

9 III, pp. 130-1.

10 III, p. 148.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 III, p. 149.

14 III, p. 160.

15 III, p. 161.

16 III, p. 162.

17 III, p. 164.

18 Cf. III, p. 134.

19 Cf. III, pp. 18-28.

20 III, p. 33.

21 III, p. 19.

22 III, p. 18.

23 III, p. 19.

24 Ibid.

25 III, p. 20.

26 Ibid.

27 III, p. 21.

28 I, p. 281.

29 II, p. 116.

30 III, p. 121.

31 Karl Jaspers, "On My Philosophy", Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre, ed. Walter Kaufmann, Meridian Books (Cleveland: The World Publishing Co., 1956), p. 139.

Chapter IV (pp. 69-84)

1 Cf. III, pp. 192-208.

2 Cf. Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, A 576/B 604.

3 III, p. 193.

4 III, p. 199.

5 III, p. 200

6 III, p. 202.

7 Ibid.

8 T & S, p. 43.

9 Ibid.

10 T & S, p. 44.

11 T & S, p. 45.

12 T & S, p. 47.

13 Karl Jaspers, Nietzsche, An Introduction to the Understanding of His Philosophical Activity, trans. Charles F. Wallraff and Frederick J. Schmitz (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1965), p. 448.

14 T & S, p. 26.

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